

NO. CCCXLVIII.

FRENCH'S STANDARD DRAMA.

IDENTITY;

OR.

No THOROUGHFARE.

BY LOUIS LEQUEL.

DRAMATIZED FROM THE CHRISTMAS STORY OF

CHARLES DICKENS AND WILKIE COLLINS.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1867, by Louis Lequel, in the Clerk's Office of  
the District Court of the United States, for the Southern District of New York.

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NEW YORK:

SAMUEL FRENCH, PUBLISHER,

122 NASSAU STREET.

ORIGINAL CAST—[IDENTITY ; or, No THOROUGHFARE.]

*As performed at Mrs. F. B. Conway's Park Theatre, Brooklyn, Jan. 6, 1868.*

MARGUERITE, Obenreizer's Niece.....	MRS. F. B. CONWAY.
OBEFREIZER, a Swiss Merchant.....	MR. F. B. CONWAY.
Geo. Vendale, of the firm of Wilding & Co..	Mr. Claude Hamilton.
Walter Wilding, his Senior Partner.....	Mr. H. Meeker.
Mr. Bintrey, a Lawyer.....	Mr. F. Chippendale.
Joey Ladle, Wilding & Co.'s Cellarman.....	Mr. Belvil Ryan.
Maitre Voigt, a Notary.....	Mr. G. Wren.
Jarvis, Clerk to Wilding & Co.....	Mr. Samuels.
First Convent Porter.....	Mr. A. Queen.
Second Convent Porter.....	Mr. Edves.
First Guide.....	Mr. Webster.
Second Guide.....	Mr. Shannon.
Landlord of the Swiss Inn.....	Mr. S. Parker.
Mrs. Goldstraw.....	Mrs. H. Howard.
Madame Dor, Obenreizer's housekeeper.....	Mrs. Whitman.

---

ACT I.—*Wilding & Co.—The Senior Partner's Story.*

ACT II.—*Vendale makes Love and causes mischief.*

ACT III.—*The "Tourmente" on the Alps.*

THRILLING "SENSATION SCENE."

THE MURDER IN THE GALLERY.

MARGUERITE'S LOVE.

ACT IV.—*Obenreizer makes a discovery.*

HONOR AND LOVE TO MARGUERITE.

---

PERIOD OF THE PLAY 1861-2.

The first two acts are laid in England—the last two in Switzerland

---

RELATIVE POSITIONS, EXITS, &C.

R., means Right; L., Left; R. H., Right Hand; L. H., Left Hand; C., Centre; S. E., (or 2d E.,) Second Entrance; U. E., Upper Entrance; M. D., Middle Door; F., the Flat; D. F., Door in Flat; R. C., Right of Centre; L. C. Left of Centre.

\* \* The reader is supposed to be upon the Stage, facing the audience.

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Permission to perform this Play can be obtained from the Author's Agent, Mr. C. T. PARSONS, 566 Broadway, to whom Managers are requested to apply.

The right of performance, free of charge, is accorded to Amateurs.

812  
L 55 i

English

# IDENTITY;

OR,

27 Feb 22 N.R.H.

## "NO THOROUGHFARE."

### ACT I.

PERIOD, 1861.

SCENE.—(*Which stands the Act.*) WILDING'S Counting-House. Door of Strong Room c. Door in flat R. backed by interior. Window in flat R. backed by street. Fireplace set R., set door L., table-desk R. C., chairs R. and L.; on table-desk, decanter of Port and wine glasses, plate full of biscuits. Lady's portrait over mantel R. Decorations, &c., style of the early Georges. WILDING (*in mourning*) and BINTREY discovered drinking wine.

English 14 m 19 u gelim 75

Wilding When a man at five-and-twenty can put his hat on, [*Suiting the action to the word*] and say "This hat covers the owner of this property and of the business which is transacted on this property in Cripple Corner, through which there is 'No THOROUGHFARE,'" I consider, Mr. Bintrey, that, without being boastful, he may be allowed to be deeply thankful. I don't know how it may appear to you, but so it appears to me. [*Takes hat off.*]

Bintrey Yes, yes. Ha! ha!

Wild You like this forty-five-year-old port?

Bint Like it? Rather, sir!

Wild [*Falling BINTREY'S glass.*] It's from the best corner of our best forty-five-year-old bin.

Bint [*Holding up his glass.*] Thank you, sir. It's most excellent. Ha! ha!

Wild [*Smiling.*] And now, I think we have got everything straight, Mr. Bintrey.

Bint Everything straight?

Wild A partner secured—

Bint A partner secured—a housekeeper all but engaged—

Wild My late dear mother's affairs wound up—

Bint Wound up—

Wild And all charges paid.

Bint [*Chuckling.*] And all charges paid. Ha! ha!

Wild [*Wiping his eyes with handkerchief.*] The mention of my late dear mother unmans me still. Mr. Bintrey, you know how I loved



her; you (her lawyer) know how she loved me. The utmost love of mother and child was cherished between us, and we never experienced one moment's division or unhappiness, from the time when she took me under her care. Thirteen years under my late dear mother's care, Mr. Bintrey, and eight of them her confidentially acknowledged son; you know the story.

*Bint* I know the story.

*Wild* My late dear mother had been deeply deceived, and had cruelly suffered; but on that subject her lips were forever sealed. By whom deceived, or under what circumstances, heaven only knows. My late dear mother never betrayed her betrayer.

*Bint* She had made up her mind, and she could hold her peace. [*Aside.*] A great deal better than you ever will.

*Wild* When I came of age, she bestowed her inherited share in this business upon me; it was her money that afterwards bought out Pebbleson Nephew, and painted in Wilding & Co.; it was she who left me everything she possessed, but the mourning ring you wear. And yet, Mr. Bintrey, [*With a burst of affection*] she is no more. It is little over half a year since she came into the Corner to read on the door-post, with her own eyes, Wilding & Co., Wine Merchants. And yet she is no more. [*Puts handkerchief to his eyes.*]

*Bint.* [*Eyeing his glass of wine.*] Sad! But the common lot, Mr. Wilding. At some time or other we must all be no more.

[*Drinks wine.*]

*Wild* [*Mastering his tears.*] So now that I can no longer show my love and honor for the dear parent to whom my heart was mysteriously turned by nature, (when she first spoke to me a strange lady, I sitting at our Sunday dinner-table in the Foundling Hospital), I can at least show that I am not ashamed of having been a Foundling, and that I, who never knew a father of my own, wish to be a father to all in my employment. Therefore, I want a thoroughly good housekeeper to undertake this dwelling-house of Wilding & Co., Wine Merchants, Cripple Corner, so that I may restore in it some of the old relations betwixt employer and employed. So that the people in my employment may lodge under the same roof with me. So that we may, one and all—I beg your pardon, Mr. Bintrey, but that old singing in my head has come on—I—I—

[*Leans back in his chair, his hand to his head.*]

*Bint* [*Rising.*] Don't let your good feelings excite you.

*Wild* [*Recovering.*] No, no! I won't, I won't! I have not been confused, have I?

*Bint* Not at all. Perfectly clear.

*Wild* Where did I leave off, Mr. Bintrey?

*Bint* [*Sitting.*] Well, you left off—but I wouldn't excite myself, if I was you, by taking it up just yet.

*Wild* I'll take care. I'll take care. The singing in my head came on at where, Mr. Bintrey?

*Bint* Lodging under the same roof, and one and all—Do you know, I really would not let my good feelings excite me, if I was you.

*Wild* Having lost my dear mother, I find that I am more fit for

being one of a body than one by myself. To be that, and at the same time to do my duty to those dependent on me, and attach them to me, has a patriarchal and pleasant air about it. I don't know how it may appear to you, Mr. Bintrey, but so it appears to me.

*Bint* [*Rising and cordially.*] How it appears to me, my dear sir, is of very small importance. As for your wish, all good be with it. But I must leave you now; good-bye for the present, sir, I will look in upon you again to-day on my way home.

*Wild* [*Shaking hands.*] Do so, Mr. Bintrey. [*Sits at desk, BINTREY exits door L., knock door in flat.*] Come in!

*Enter JOEY LADLE, dressed as a Vintner's porter, or cellarman, bibbed apron, adze in belt, candle in cleft stick in his hands.*

*Joey* [*Putting candle down.*] Respecting this same boarding and lodging, Young Master Wilding.

*Wild* Yes, Joey?

*Joey* Speaking for myself, Young Master Wilding,—and I never did speak and I never do speak for no one else—I don't want no boarding nor yet no lodging. But if you wish to board me and to ledge me, take me. I can peck as well as most men. Where I peck, ain't so high a object with me as what I peck. Nor even so high a object with me as how much I peck. Is all to live in the house, Young Master Wilding? The two other cellarman, the three porters, the two 'prentices, and the odd men!

*Wild* Yes, I hope we shall all be an united family, Joey.

*Joey* Ah, I hope they may be.

*Wild* They! Rather say we, Joey.

*Joey* [*Shaking his head.*] Don't look to me to make we on it, Young Master Wilding, not at my time of life and under the circumstances which has formed my disposition. I have said to Pebbleson Nephew many a time, when they have said to me, "Put a livelier face upon it, Joey,"—I have said to them, "gentlemen, it is all very well for you, that has been accustomed to take your wine into your systems by the convivial channel of your throats, to put a lively face upon it; but" I says, "I have been accustomed to take my wine in at the pores of the skin, and, took that way, it acts different. It acts depressing. I've been a cellarman my life through, with my mind fully given to the business. What's the consequences? I'm as muddled a man as lives—you won't find a muddler man than me—nor yet you won't find my equal in mollencholly—Sing of filling the bumper fair, every drop you sprinkle o'er the brow of care smothers away a wrinkle! Yes, p'raps so. But try filling yourself through the pores, underground, when you don't want to do it."

*Wild* I am sorry to hear this, Joey. I had even thought that you might join a singing-class in the house.

*Joey* Me, sir? No, no, Young Master Wilding, you won't catch Joey Ladle muddling the 'armony. A pecking-machine, sir, is all that I am capable of proving myself, out of my cellars; but that you're welcome to, if you think it's worth your while to keep such a thing on your premises.

*Wild* I do, Joey.

*Joey* Say no more, sir, the business's word is my law. And so you've took Young Master George Vendale partner into the old business?

*Wild* I have, Joey.

*Joey* More changes, you see! But don't change the name of the firm again. Don't do it, Young Master Wilding. It was bad luck enough to make it Yourself & Co. Better by far have left it Pebble-son Nephew, that good luck a'ways stuck to. You should never change luck when it's good, sir.

*Wild* At all events, I have no intention of changing the name of the House again, Joey.

*Joey* Glad to hear it, and wish you good day, Young Master Wilding. But you had better by half [*Half-aside as he crosses to door in flat, shaking his head*] have let the name alone from the first. You had better by half have followed the luck instead of crossing it.

[*Exits door in flat.*]

*Wild* I've been crossing the luck, eh? who knows, perhaps I have. Joey thinks I should have followed it—perhaps he is right in that too. Time will tell.

*Enter JARVIS, door L.*

*Jarvis* A lady to see you, sir!

*Wild* Show her in, Jarvis.

[*JARVIS goes to door L, MRS. GOLDSTRAW enters in mourning, JARVIS exits door L, WILDING rises and meets her.*]

*Wild* The lady who answered my advertisement for a housekeeper, and who is here by my appointment, I believe.

*Mrs. Goldstraw* The same, sir.

*Wild* [*Returning to his seat at desk.*] What name shall I have the pleasure of noting down?

*Mrs G* My name is Sarah Goldstraw, Mrs. Goldstraw. My husband has been dead many years, and we had no family.

*Wild* You will excuse my asking you a few questions?

*Mrs G* O, surely, sir, or I should have no business here.

*Wild* Have you filled the station of housekeeper before?

*Mrs G* Only once. I have lived with the same widow lady for twelve years. Ever since I lost my husband. She was an invalid, and is lately dead, which is the occasion of my now wearing black.

*Wild* I do not doubt that she has left you the best credentials?

*Mrs G* I hope I may say, the very best. I thought it would save trouble, sir, if I brought them with me—they are here!

[*Producing a packet of letters.*]

*Wild* [*Half rising and taking them.*] You singularly remind me, Mrs. Goldstraw, of a manner and tone of voice that I was once acquainted with. Not of an individual—I feel sure of that, though I cannot recall what it is I have in my mind—but of a general bearing. I ought to add, it was a kind and pleasant one.

*Mrs G* [*Smiling.*] At least I am very glad of that, sir.



*Wild* [*Thoughtfully.*] Yes, it was a kind and pleasant one. But that is the most I can make of it. Memory is sometimes like a half-forgotten dream. I don't know how it may appear to you, Mrs. Goldstraw, but so it appears to me. Sit down, whilst I glance, for form's sake, at these letters.

*Mrs G* Thank you, sir.

[*Sits—A pause.*]

*Wild* [*Having glanced through the letters.*] Everything that could be desired, Mrs. Goldstraw, and we may as well call the matter "settled," upon the terms named yesterday—now as for your duties—what's the matter?

[*Mrs. GOLDSTRAW has been looking round the room, whilst WILDING has been reading; she has started at sight of the picture over fire-place and remains looking at it.*]

*Mrs G* My—my—my duties—yes, sir—you were saying—

*Wild*—I was saying—dear, dear me, Mrs. Goldstraw! what is the manner and tone of voice that you remind me of? It strikes me more and more strongly. What can it be?

*Mrs G* [*Still looking at the picture.*] What can it be?

*Wild* [*Following her look.*] My late dear mother's portrait, when she was five-and-twenty. Excuse my asking you a question which has nothing to do with your duties. May I inquire if you have ever occupied any other situation than that of housekeeper?

*Mrs G* Oh, yes, sir. I began life as one of the nurses at the Foundling Hospital.

*Wild* [*Pushing back his chair.*] Why, that's it, by heaven! Their manner is the manner you remind me of. [*A pause.*] What is the matter?

*Mrs G* [*Sinking into chair, quietly.*] Do I understand that you were in the Foundling, sir?

*Wild.* Certainly. I am not ashamed to own it.

*Mrs G* Under the name you now bear?

*Wild* Under the name of "Walter Wilding."

*Mrs G* And the lady—

*Wild* You mean my mother?

*Mrs G* Your—mother—[*Constrainedly*] removed you from the Foundling Hospital? At what age, sir?

*Wild* At between eleven and twelve years old. It's quite a romantic adventure, Mrs. Goldstraw. My poor mother could never have discovered me, if she had not met with one of the matrons who pitied her. The matron consented to touch the boy whose name was "Walter Wilding" as she went round the dinner-tables, —and so my mother discovered me again, after having parted from me as an infant at the Foundling doors. [*Mrs. GOLDSTRAW's head drops on her hands on the table.*] What does this mean? Stop! Is there something else in the past time which I ought to associate with you? I remember my mother telling me of another person at the Foundling, to whose kindness she owed a debt of gratitude. When she first parted with me, as an infant, one of the nurses informed her of the name that had been given to me in that institution? You were that nurse!

*Mrs G* God forgive me, sir—I *was* that nurse.

*Wild* God forgive you? What do you mean?

*Mrs G* Nothing, sir—nothing!

*Wild* Mrs. Goldstraw, you are concealing something from me.

*Mrs G* You were about to inform me, sir, that my duties—

*Wild* I can't enter into my household affairs, Mrs. Goldstraw, till I know why you regret an act of kindness to my mother, which she always spoke of gratefully to the end of her life. You are not doing me a service by your silence. You are agitating me—you are alarming me—you are bringing on a singing in my head.

*Mrs. G* It's hard, sir, on just entering your service, to say what may cost me the loss of your good will. Please to remember, end how it may, that I only speak because you insist. This, then, is my story: When I told the poor lady there, the name by which her infant was christened, I forgot my duty, and dreadful consequences, I am afraid, have followed from it. I'll tell you the truth, as plainly as I can. A few months from the time when I had informed the lady of her baby's name, there came to our Institution another lady, whose object was to adopt one of our children. After looking at a great many of them, without being able to make up her mind, she took a sudden fancy to one of the babies—a boy—under my care. Try, pray try to compose yourself, sir! It's no use disguising it any longer. The child the stranger took away was the child of that lady whose portrait hangs there!

*Wild* [*Starting to his feet vehemently.*] What are you talking about? What absurd story are you telling me now? 'There's her portrait! Haven't I told you so already? The portrait of my mother!

*Mrs G* [*Gently.*] When that unhappy lady removed you from the Foundling Hospital, in after years, she was the victim, and you were the victim of a dreadful mistake.

*Wild* [*Putting his hand to his head and speaking with pain*] Mistake? How do I know you are not mistaken yourself?

*Mrs G* There is no hope that I am mistaken, sir. I will tell you why, when you are better fit to hear it.

*Wild* [*Nervously and quickly.*] Now, now!

*Mrs G* I have told you that the child of that lady [*Pointing to portrait*] was adopted in infancy, and taken away by a stranger. I am as certain of what I say as that I am here. Please to carry your mind on, to about three months after that time. I was still at the Foundling. There was one day a question about naming an infant—a boy—who had just been received. We generally named them out of the Directory. On this occasion, the Manager, looking over the Register, noticed that the name of a baby who had been adopted (Walter Wilding) was scratched out; the child having been removed from our care. "Here's a name to let," he said. "Give it to the new foundling who has been received to-day." The name was given and the child was christened. You, sir, were that child.

*Wild* [*As in a reverie.*] I was that child? I was that child?

*Mrs G* Not long after you had been received into the Institution, I left my situation, to be married. Between eleven and twelve years passed before the lady, whom you believe to be your mother, re-

turned to the Foundling, to find her son, and to remove him to her home. She only knew it had been called "Walter Wilding." The matron, taking pity on her, could but point out the only "Walter Wilding" known in the place. I, who might have set the matter right, was far away. There was nothing—there was really nothing—that could have prevented this terrible mistake from taking place. I feel for you—I do indeed, sir! you must think—and with reason—that it was in an evil hour, that I came here to apply for your housekeeper's place. I feel as if I was to blame. If I had only been able to keep command of my face, you need never, to your dying day, have known what you now know.

*Wild* [*Somewhat indignantly.*] Do you mean to say that you would have concealed this from me if you could?

*Mrs G* I hope I should always tell the truth, sir, if I was asked, and I know it is better for *me* that I should not have a secret of this sort weighing on my mind. But is it better for *you*? What use can it can it serve now—?

*Wild* What use? If your story is true—

*Mrs G* Should I have told it, sir, as I am situated, if it had not been true?

*Wild* I beg your pardon. You must make allowance for me. This dreadful discovery is something I can't realize even yet. Don't talk of concealing it. It would have been a crime to have hidden it. You mean well, I know. I don't want to distress you—you are a kind-hearted woman, but you don't know what my position is. She left me all that I possess, in the firm persuasion that I was her son. I am *not* her son. I have taken the place—I have innocently got the inheritance of another man. He must be found! How do I know he is not at this moment in misery, without bread to eat? He must be found! You must know more, Mrs. Goldstraw, than you have told me yet. Who was the stranger who adopted the child? You must have heard the lady's name?

*Mrs G* I never heard it, sir. I have never seen her, or heard of her since.

*Wild* Did she say nothing when she took the child away? Search your memory. She must have said something.

*Mrs G* Only one thing, sir, that I can remember. It was a miserably bad season that year: and many of the children were suffering from it. When she took the baby away, the lady said to me, laughingly, "Don't be alarmed about his health. He will be brought up in a better climate than this,—I am going to take him to Switzerland."

*Wild* To Switzerland? What part of Switzerland?

*Mrs G* She didn't say, sir.

*Wild* Only that faint clue! and a quarter of a century has passed since the child was taken away! What am I to do? What am I to do?

[*His head sinks on table.*]

*Mrs G* If I was in your place, sir, I should comfort myself with remembering that I had loved that poor lady—truly loved her as my mother, and that she had truly loved me as her son. All she gave

to you, she gave for the sake of that love. It never altered while she lived, and it won't alter, I'm sure, as long as *you* live. How can you have a better right, sir, to keep what you have got than that?

*Wild [Raising his head.]* You don't understand me. It's *because* I loved her that I feel it a duty—a sacred duty—to do justice to her son. If he is a living man, I must find him. I shall break down under this dreadful trial, unless I employ myself—actively, instantly—in doing what my conscience tells me ought to be done. I must speak to my lawyer; I must set my lawyer to work before I sleep to-night. Leave me for a little, Mrs. Goldstraw, I shall be more composed and better able to speak to you later in the day. I hope we shall get on well together—in spite of what has happened. It isn't your fault; I know it isn't your fault. There! There! Shake hands; and—and do the best you can in the house—I can't talk about it now.—Do me one other service. I am about to send for my lawyer, Mr. Bintrey—tell him the whole story—I am not equal to the task, and he must know all for the purpose I have in view! Now leave me.

*[MRS. GOLDSTRAW exits door in flat as JARVIS enters with a letter.]*

*Wild [To JARVIS]* Send for Mr. Bintrey, say I want to see him directly. When he arrives show him to the housekeeper's room, and tell Mrs. Goldstraw, the lady who has just left the room.

*Jarvis* Yes, sir. Mr. Vendale, sir, to see you.

*VENDALE enters door in flat.*

*Wild [Anxiously and quickly.]* Pray excuse me for one moment, George—I have a word to say to Jarvis. Send for Mr. Bintrey, at once, and remember to take him first to Mrs. Goldstraw's room.

*Jarvis [Laying letter on desk.]* From our correspondents at Neuchâtel, I think, sir. The letter has the Swiss postmark.

*[Exits door in flat.]*

*Wild [Starting.]* From Switzerland?

*Vendale* Wilding, what is the matter?

*Wild* My good George, so much is the matter, that I shall never be myself again. It is impossible that I can ever be myself again. For, in fact, I am not myself.

*Ven* Not yourself?

*Wild* Not what I supposed myself to be.

*Ven* Come, come, whatever has gone wrong, has gone wrong through no fault of yours, I am very sure. I was not in the counting-house with you under the old *regime*, for three years, to doubt you, Wilding. Let me begin our partnership by being a serviceable partner, and setting right whatever is wrong. Has that letter anything to do with it?

*Wild [Holding his hand to his head.]* Hah! my head! I was forgetting the coincidence. The Swiss postmark.

*Ven [Taking up the letter.]* Is it for you, or for us?

*Wild* For us!

*Ven* Suppose I open it and read it aloud, to get it out of the way.

*Wild* Thank you, thank you.

*Ven* [Reading.] “Dear Sir.—We are in receipt of yours, informing us that you have taken MR. VENDALE into partnership. Permit us to specially commend to you M. JULES OBENREIZER. Impossible!

*Wild* Eh?

*Ven* Impossible sort of name—“Obenreizer.” [Reading.] “To specially commend to you M. JULES OBENREIZER, of London, fully accredited as our Agent, and who has already made the acquaintance of MR. VENDALE in his, MR. OBENREIZER’S native country, Switzerland,—” to be sure; pooh, pooh; what have I been thinking of! I remember now—when traveling with his niece. [Starts and pauses.] When traveling with his niece. Obenreizer’s niece—niece of Obenreizer. I met them in my first Swiss tour, traveled a little with them, and lost them for two years; met them again, and have lost them ever since. Obenreizer. Niece of Obenreizer. To be sure! Possible sort of name after all. [Reads.] “M. OBENREIZER is in possession of our absolute confidence, and we do not doubt you will esteem his merits.—Defreisner & Co.” Very well. I undertake to see Obenreizer presently and clear him out of the way. So much for the Swiss postmark. So now, my dear Wilding, tell me what I can clear out of your way.

*Wild* I am an impostor.

*Ven* An impostor!

*Wild* Yes! The woman whom I have just engaged as my house-keeper has been the means of opening my eyes to the fact that I am not “Walter Wilding,” and that all the loving kindness of that dear lady [Pointing to picture] has been lavished upon one who was not her child—that another person has a juster claim, and that I stand in that other person’s way—that I possess his fortune, have enjoyed his rights in the affection of my benefactress, and that I am an impostor. But he must be found.

*Ven* As to your being an impostor, my dear Wilding, that is simply absurd, because no man can be that without being a consenting party. Clearly you never were so. It was on you, personally, as I see it, that she conferred these worldly advantages; it was from her, personally her, that you took them.

*Wild* [Shaking his head.] She supposed me to have a natural claim upon her which I had not.

*Ven* I must admit that. But if she had made this discovery, do you think it would have canceled the years you were together, and the tenderness that each of you had conceived for the other.

*Wild* [Stoutly.] What I think can no more change the truth than it can bring down the sky. The truth is that I stand possessed of what was meant for another.

*Ven* He may be dead.

*Wild* He may be alive. And if he is, have I not—innocently, I grant you—robbed him of enough? Have I not robbed him of all the happy time that I enjoyed in his stead? Have I not robbed him of the exquisite delight that filled my soul when that dear lady [Stretching his hand towards the picture] told me she was my mother? Have I not robbed him of all the care she lavished on me? Have I not even robbed him of all the devotion and duty that I so proudly



gave her? Therefore it is that I ask myself, George Vendale, and I ask you, where is he, what has become of him?

*Ven* Who can tell?

*Wild* I must try and find out who can tell. I must institute inquiries. I must never desist from prosecuting inquiries. I will live upon the interest of my share—I ought rather to say his share—in this business, and will lay up the rest for him. When I find him I may perhaps throw myself upon his generosity; but I will yield up all to him. I will, I swear, as I loved and honored her.

*[Reverently kisses his hand to picture, then covering his face, sinks into chair overcome with emotion.]*

*Ven* *[Rising and standing near WILDING]* Well, I have no more to say now, Walter, than to remind you that you sold me a share in your business expressly to save yourself from more work than your present health is fit for, and I bought it expressly to do work, and mean to do it. Here is Bintrey, and with him a lady, your new housekeeper, I presume.

*Enter, door in flat, BINTREY and MRS. GOLDSTRAW.*

*Bint* *[As WILDING is about to speak.]* This lady has told me everything necessary for me to know concerning the strange story. I am here, not so much to give advice, as to receive instructions. What do you want me to do?

*Wild* To make a will!

*Bint* A will, eh! ha, ha! do I understand you clearly?

*Wild* Clearly! I only wish my head was as clear as your understanding.

*Bint* If you feel that singing in it, coming on, put it off. I mean the business.

*Wild* Not at all, I thank you. What I was going to—

*Bint* Don't excite yourself, Mr. Wilding.

*Wild* No, I wasn't going to. Mr. Bintrey and George Vendale, would you have any hesitation or objection to become my joint executors and trustees, and will you at once consent?

*Ven* *[Quickly.]* I consent.

*Bint* *[Slowly.]* I consent.

*Wild* Thank you both—will you prepare your papers?—*[BINTREY writes.]* But first, as my executors, solemnly promise to aid me in using every effort to discover the true “Walter Wilding”—to spare no expense, to grudge no labor for that one purpose!—*[They bow consent.]* My instructions for my last will and testament are short and plain, perhaps you will have the goodness to prepare it at once—I leave the whole of my real and personal estate, without any exception or reservation whatsoever, to you two, my joint trustees and executors, in trust to pay over the whole to the true “Walter Wilding,” if he shall be found and identified within two years after the day of my death. Failing that, in trust to you to pay over the whole as a benefaction and legacy to the Foundling Hospital.

*Bint* *[After a pause.]* Those are all your instructions, are they, Mr. Wilding?

*Wild* The whole !

*Bint* And as to those instructions you have absolutely made up your mind, Mr. Wilding ?

*Wild* Absolutely, decidedly, *finally* !

*Bint* Is there any hurry about signing this will—you are not going to die yet, sir ?

*Wild* Mr. Bintrey, *when* I am going to die is within other knowledge than yours or mine. I shall be glad to have this matter off my mind—if you please.

*Bint* [*Placing papers before WILDING.*] Then here are the papers—That is the place for your signature. And may you live years to come.

*Wild* Thanks ! [*Signs will, then as he sits gives a groan, puts hand to his head.*] Ah, my head—my head—my head ! [*Faints.*]

*Mrs G* He has fainted !

*Ven* Walter, my dear Walter ! Quick, Mr. Bintrey, help me to raise him. [*They place him in an easy position.*]

*Bint* Hush ! he is recovering.

*Wild* [*Very faintly.*] The old child feeling is coming back upon me. The old hush and rest, as I used to fall asleep. [*A long pause.*] Please kiss me, nurse.

[*MRS. GOLDSTRAW weepingly bends over him and kisses him.*]

*Mrs G* [*In a low voice.*] God bless you !

*Wild* [*In same voice.*] God bless you ! [*After a long pause.*] George, I think my time is come. I don't know how it may appear to you, George, but—[*A long pause.*] I don't know how it may appear to you, nurse, but so—it—appears—to—me.

*Ven* He sleeps !

*Mrs G* Yes ! forever !

PICTURE—SLOW CURTAIN.

## ACT II.

FIVE MONTHS LATER.

SCENE I.—OBENREIZER'S *House*—*An apartment fitted up like the Sitting-Room of a Swiss House. White tiled stove, L. II.—sofa, chairs, carpet near sofa, R, and near stove. The rest of the room bare floor. Clocks, Swiss ware, &c., disposed about the room. Door L. Table. Door in flat L. Window R.*

MARGUERITE and MADAME DOR *discovered*. MADAME DOR *sitting near stove L. (her back to the audience,) mending stockings. MARGUERITE at embroidery frame.*

*Marguerite* New Year's Day ! I wonder if Mr. Vendale will accept my guardian's invitation to visit us. Let me see ! When was it he was here last—a week ! So long !—no—it was only three days !—Surely that is his step—and that his voice.

OBERREIZER and VENDALE (*in mourning,*) enter, door in flat, conversing.

Oberreizer Ah! - Here are Marguerite and Madame Dor.

[VENDALE bows to MADAME DOR, and crosses to MARGUERITE and shakes hand.]

Ven [*Producing small jewel case.*] This is your first New Year's Day in England. Will you let me help you to make it like a New Year's Day at home?

Mar [*Taking the case.*] Thanks! [*Opening it.*] It is beautiful!

Ober [*Who has come between them*] Such a simple present, dear sir, and showing such tact.

Mar It is indeed a beautiful present, and I thank you again, Mr. Vendale. But what were you talking about as you came in?

Ober I was telling our dear friend here, how much he has condescended in having entered into trade. To trade like us poor peasants, who have risen from ditches.

Mar Guardian, you are jesting.

Ober [*Enthusiastically.*] Not I! Why, it is good for trade! It ennobles trade, it is its vulgarity that any low people—for example, we poor peasants—may take to it and climb by it. See you, my dear Vendale! the father of Miss Marguerite here, my eldest half brother, more than two times your age or mine if living now, wandered without shoes, almost without rags, from that wretched pass, where we lived,—wandered,—wandered,—got to be fed with the mules and dogs at an Inn in the main valley far away,—got to be boy there,—got to be ostler,—got to be waiter,—got to be cook,—got to be landlord. As landlord, he took me to put as pupil to the famous watchmaker, his neighbor and friend. His wife dies when Marguerite is born. What is his will, and what are his words to me, when he dies, she being between girl and woman? "All for Marguerite, except so much by the year for you. You are young, but I make her your ward, for you were of the obscurest and the poorest peasantry, and so was I, and so was her mother; we were abject peasants all, and you will remember it." Then how good and great for trade to be exalted by a gentleman.

Mar [*Quietly.*] I do not think so. I think it is as much exalted by us peasants.

Ober Fie fie! Miss Marguerite, you speak in proud England.

Ven Pray say no more about it. When first I had the pleasure of traveling with you, and when you and I and Miss Marguerite shared some slight glacier dangers together, I perhaps rather boyishly vaunted of my family. I am, I hope, wiser, now. You know an English proverb "Live and learn."

Ober You make too much of it, after all, yours *was* a fine family!

Ven [*Laughing slightly, but annoyed.*] Well, I was strongly attached to my parents, and when we first traveled together, Mr. Oberreizer. I was in the first flush of coming into what my father and mother left me. So I hope it may have been, after all, more youthful openness of speech and heart than boastfulness.

Ober All openness of speech and heart! No boastfulness! You tax yourself too heavy. You tax yourself, my faith, as if you was

your government taxing you ! Besides, it commenced with me. I remember that evening in the boat, upon the lake, floating among the reflections of the mountains and valleys, the crags and pine woods, which were my earliest remembrance, I drew a word-picture of my sordid childhood. Of our poor hut by the waterfall, which my mother showed to travelers ; of the cow-shed where I slept with the cow ; of my idiot half-brother, always sitting at the door or limping down the pass to beg ; of my half-sister always spinning ; of my being a famished, naked little wretch of two or three years, when they were men and women, with hard hands to beat me, I, the only child of my father's second marriage—if it even was a marriage. What more natural than for you to compare notes with me, and say, " We are of an age ; but in my boyhood I sat in my mother's carriage, rolling through the rich English streets, all luxury surrounding me, all squalid poverty kept far from me."

*Ven* Well, all I can say is, that I regret my foolish boasting, now, more than ever.

*Enter door in flut, a woman* SERVANT *with a small note, which she hands to* OBENREIZER *and exi's.* VENDALE and MARGUERITE *have taken seats on sofa, whilst OBENREIZER reads the note.*

*Oben* Here is a troublesome matter, dear sir, which will compel my absence for a time. I am so shocked, so confused, so distressed. A misfortune has happened to one of my compatriots. He is alone, he is ignorant of your language, I have no choice but to go and help him. What can I say in my excuse ? How can I describe my affliction at depriving myself in this way of the honor of your company ? [A pause.]

*Ven* [Smiling.] Pray don't distress yourself ; I'll wait here with the greatest pleasure till you come back.

*Oben* [Mastering his emotion of annoyance.] So frank ! so friendly ! so English ! [Goes to door L. takes out coat and hat, quickly returns] I will return at the earliest moment. Believe me, dear sir, I am greatly shocked.

[Exits door in flut. MADAME DOR *half rises and looks over her shoulder at* VENDALE and MARGUERITE, *then resumes her work.*

*Ven* [Aside.] Confound that Madame Dor ; why didn't he take her with him ? I never can get a moment alone with Marguerite. Well, I must make the best use of this chance. [Crosses to MARGUERITE and takes his place by her side on sofa ; speaks to her half aside.] I fear your guardian's conversation just now has awakened unpleasant thoughts.

*Mar* He was both cynical and unjust.

*Ven* My recollections of Switzerland are of the happiest.

*Mar* Yes !

*Ven* Yes, for they are associated with memories of travel with you.

*Mar* That is a compliment to me at the expense of my country.

*Ven* No—no compliment—I don't want to pay compliments—I want to tell you—I have long wished to tell you—that the remembrance of days passed in your society, in that beautiful country, are,

and ever will be, the happiest remembrances of my life—their brightness and joy seem almost dreamy.

[MADAME DOR is seen to be dozing.

Mar [*Quietly.*] Yes, they were happy days.

Ven Now that I am tied down by business and the thousand and one annoyances of city life, I seem to see the past in a newer and a more brilliant light.

Mar How so?

Ven Because the contrast between them is so marked—so marvelous.

Mar You ought not to complain of what you should consider a duty—Am I right? You know I don't exactly know what I shall answer. MADAME DOR's work falls from her lap, and she starts from her nap. MARGUERITE rises. MADAME DOR has fallen asleep again—VENDALE lays his hand on MARGUERITE's arm.

Ven [*In a low voice.*] Don't disturb her, I have been waiting to tell you a secret. Let me tell it now.

[MARGUERITE sits, takes up her embroidery and attempts to work, but stops.

Ven We have been talking of the happy time when we first met and first traveled together. I have a confession to make. I have been concealing something. When we spoke of my first visit to Switzerland, I told you of all the impressions I had brought back with me to England—except one. Can you guess what that one is? [MARGUERITE turns her head away.] Can you guess what the one Swiss impression is, which I have not told you yet?

Mar [*Smiling slyly.*] An impression of the mountains, perhaps.

Ven No ; a much more precious impression than that.

Mar Of the lakes?

Ven No, the lakes have not grown dearer and dearer in remembrance to me every day. The lakes are not associated with my happiness in the present, and my hopes in the future. Marguerite ! all that makes life worth having hangs for me, on a word from your lips. Marguerite ! I love you !

Mar [*Wiping her eyes, and sadly.*] O, Mr. Vendale, it would have been kinder to have kept your secret. Have you forgotten the distance between us ? It can never, never be !

Ven There can be but one distance between us, Marguerite—a distance of your own making. My love, my darling, there is no higher rank in goodness, there is no higher rank in beauty, than yours ! Come ! whisper the one little word which tells me you will be my wife !

Mar [*Sighing bitterly.*] Think of your family, and think of mine !

Ven If you dwell on such an obstacle as that, I shall think but one thought—I shall think but one thought—I shall think I have offended you.

Mar [*Quickly.*] Oh, no—[*Stops, confused.*—VENDALE snatches her to his arms and kisses her.—*Faintly.*] Let me go, Mr. Vendale !

Ven Call me George.

Mar [*Laying her head on his shoulder, and in a whisper.*] George !

Ven Say you love me.



*Mar* [*Puts her arms gently round his neck, and timidly touches his cheek with her lips.*] I love you!

[*A knock heard.*—*MARGUERITE starts from him and rises from the sofa.*

*Mar.* Let me go! He has come back.

[*As she goes out at door L, she touches MADAME DOR, who wakes with a loud snort, looks first over one shoulder and then over the other, peers down into her lap and cannot find worsted, stockings or needles. MADAME DOR trembles violently. VENDALE picks up the stockings and the ball, and huddles them all in a heap over her shoulder.*

*Enter OBENREIZER, door in flat, looks sharply round.*

*Oben* What! my niece away? My niece is not here to entertain you in my absence? This is unpardonable. I shall bring her back instantly.

*Ven* Do not disturb her, I beg. You have returned sooner than you expected.

*Oben* A friend remains and consoles our afflicted compatriot. A heart-rending scene, Mr. Vendale. The household gods at the pawnbroker's—the family immersed in tears—we all embraced in silence.

*Ven* Can I say a word to you in private, Mr. Obenreizer?

*Oben* Assuredly. [*Turns to MADAME DOR*] My good creature, you are sinking from want of repose. Mr. Vendale will excuse you.

[*MADAME DOR rises and starts for door L, drops a stocking, VENDALE picks it up and opens the door—She makes a few steps, drops three more stockings, VENDALE stoops and picks them up.*

*Oben* Dear sir, you condescend too much. Be more careful, Madame Dor.

[*MADAME DOR drops all the stockings and shuffles off L door. OBENREIZER sweeps up all the stockings and pitches them after her.*

*Oben* What must you think, Mr. Vendale, [*Closing the door*] of this deplorable intrusion of domestic details. For myself, I blush at it. We are beginning the New Year as badly as possible; everything has gone wrong to-day. Be seated, pray,—and say, what may I offer you? Shall we pay our best respects to one of your noble English institutions? It is my study to be, what you call jolly. I propose a grog. [*They sit.*

*Ven* Many thanks, none for me! I wish to speak to you on a subject in which I am deeply interested. You must have observed, Mr. Obenreizer, that I have, from the first, felt no ordinary admiration for your charming niece?

*Oben* You are very good. In my niece's name I thank you.

*Ven* Perhaps you may have noticed, latterly, that my admiration for Miss Obenreizer has grown into a tenderer and deeper feeling—

*Oben* Shall we say friendship, Mr. Vendale?

*Ven* Say love—and we shall be nearer to the truth.

[*OBENREIZER starts from his chair with an angry motion which he checks, and resumes his seat.*

*Ven* You are Miss Obenreizer's guardian. I ask you to confer upon me the greatest of all favors,—I ask you to give me her hand in marriage.

*Oben* Mr. Vendale, you petrify me.

*Ven* I will wait until you have recovered yourself.

*Oben* One word before I recover myself. You have said nothing about this to my niece?

*Ven* I have opened my whole heart to your niece. And I have reason to hope—

*Oben* [*Striking the table with his fist.*] What! You have made a proposal to my niece, without first asking for my authority to pay your addresses to her? [*Indignantly.*] Sir! as a man of honor, speaking to a man of honor, how can you justify it?

*Ven* [*Quietly*] I can only justify it as one of our English institutions. You admire our English institutions. I assure you that I have not acted with any intentional disrespect towards yourself. May I ask you to tell me plainly what objection you see to favoring my suit?

*Oben* I see this immense objection. My niece is the daughter of a poor peasant, and you are the son of a gentleman. You do us an honor [*Politely*] which deserves our most grateful acknowledgments. But the inequality is too glaring; the sacrifice too great. You English are a proud people, Mr. Vendale. I have observed enough of this country to see that such a marriage as you propose would be a scandal here. Not a hand would be held out to your peasant wife, and all your best friends would desert you.

*Ven* I may claim without any great arrogance, to know more of my country-people in general, and of my own friends in particular, than you. My wife would be the one sufficient justification of my marriage. If I did not feel certain—observe, I say certain—that I am offering her a position which she can accept, without so much as the shadow of humiliation, I would never (cost me what it might) have asked her to be my wife. Is there any other obstacle that you see? Have you any personal objection to me?

*Oben* [*Stretching out his hands.*] Personal objection. Dear sir, the bare question is painful to me.

*Ven* As for my means, the yearly value of my life interest and my business receipts, make a total which reaches a present annual income of fifteen hundred pounds. I have the finest prospect of soon making it more. Do you object to me on pecuniary grounds?

*Oben* [*After a pause.*] Before I answer that last question, I beg leave to revert for a moment to Miss Marguerite. You said something just now which seemed to imply that she returns the sentiment with which you are pleased to regard her?

*Ven* I have the inestimable happiness of knowing that she loves me.

*Oben* [*After a pause*] Indeed, I cannot give you an answer now. I must first see my niece. In half an hour I will call upon you at your office and we will renew the subject of our conversation. Will this suit you, dear sir?

*Ven* Certainly—I will await you anxiously; till then adieu!

[*Exits door in flat.*]

*Oben* [*Looking after him.*] So you thought you had but to open your

mouth, Mr. Vendale, declare your wishes, and have it all your own way. We shall see! we shall see! Now for Marguerite.

*[As he goes to door L. the scene closes in.]*

SCENE II.—(1st grooves.)—*The cellars under WILDING & Co.'s Warehouse. Two pairs of flats run on. The front ones, double arches; the back ones with casks, bins, and tiers of hogsheds painted on them. The walls and roof are covered with long moss-like fungus. At back of arch R, a set-piece run on; behind which are set steps, as if from above—not used till after the scene has opened.*

[JOEY enters from back at L, with lighted candle in cleft-stick—a book under his arm, a bottle of wine in his hand; on his arm a piece of crape.]

Joey I do believe as I am a gettin' muddleder and muddleder every day. I can't make anything out of that there error of Defreiser & Co.'s shipment. Such a thing never happened afore when the firm of Pebbleson Nephew was over the door. That's what I told young Master Wilding, him as was full of good intentions, that he was—"Don't cross the luck," says I, "but go along with it." But there's an end to him and all his plans—the 'armony along with the rest; and after I had heard that there Miss Marguerite sing, I says, "Arter that you may all on ye get to bed," and so they might for all the matter of their comin' anigh her in singing—that they might—but—hallo! who's that coming down the cellar steps?

VENDALE appears at the top of the steps R, with candle in cleft-stick—He descends

Ven Oh! you are here, are you, Joey?

Joey Oughtn't it rather to go, "Oh, *you're* here, are you," Master George? for it's my business to be here, but it ain't your'n.

Ven Don't grumble, Joey.

Joey Oh! I don't grumble. If anything grumbles, it's what I've took in through the pores; it ain't me. Have a care as something in *you* don't begin a grumbling, Master George. Stop here long enough for the wapors to work, and they'll be at it. You're too young, Master George.

Ven We shall get over that objection day by day.

Joey The luck's changed, Master George, I know it. I ain't been down here all my life for nothing! I know by what I notices down here, when it's a-going to rain, when it's a-going to hold up, when it's a-going to blow, when it's a-going to be calm. I know, by what I notices down here, when the luck's changed, quite as well.

Ven [*Holding his candle towards a hanging bunch of fungus.*] Has this growth on the roof anything to do with your divination? We are famous for this growth in this vault, aren't we?

Joey [*Moving aside.*] We are, Master George, and if you'll be advised by me, you'll let it alone.

Ven Ay, indeed! why so?

Joey Why not so much because it rises from the casks of wine, and may leave you to judge what sort of stuff a cellarman takes into himself all the days of his life, when he walks in these here cellars, nor yet so much because at a stage of its growth it's maggots and

you'll fetch 'em down upon you, as for another reason, Master George—

*Ven* [*Toying with the fungus.*] What's the reason?

*Joey* I would'n't keep on touching it, if I was you, sir. I'll tell you if you'll come away from it—take a look at its color, Master George.

*Joey* I am doing so! well, Joey! the color?

*Joey* Is it like clotted blood, Master George?

*Ven* Like enough, perhaps.

*Joey* More than enough, I think.

*Ven* Well, say it is like; say it is exactly like. What then?

*Joey* Master George, they do say—

*Ven* Who?

*Joey* How should I know who? Them! Them as says pretty well everything, you know. How should I know who they are, if you don't?

*Ven* True—go on!

*Joey* They do say that the man that gets by any accident a piece of that dark growth upon his breast, will for sure and certain, die by MURDER! [*JOEY suddenly starts excitedly, drops the bottle, strikes VENDALE'S breast and beats off a piece of fungus.*] There was a piece on your'n—there was, I tell you!

*Ven* [*After a pause, laughs lightly.*] You foolish fellow, I declare you have almost frightened me with your stupid superstitions.

*Joey* [*Sulkily.*] Superstition, eh? Well, call it so if you likes—I only tell you what they says and if there ain't nothing in it, it ain't my fault. I never set myself up for a prophet.

*Ven* Who ever said you did?

*Joey* No prophet, as far as I've heard tell of that profession, ever lived principally underground. No prophet, whatever else he might take in at the pores, ever took in wine from morning to night for a number of years together [*Taking his book from under his arm and opening it.*] It's foreign to my nature to crow over the house I serve, but I feel it a kind of a solemn duty to ask you to read that.

*Ven* [*Glancing at book.*] Ah, the error in the Champagne consignment. I know all about it. It has given me a good deal of anxiety already. I have written about it twice and expect another letter to-day. Are the afternoon's letters delivered?

*Joey* Not yet, Master George, they'll be here in about half an hour. Mr. Bintrey's in your private office a-waiting to see you.

*Ven* Well then I'll go and meet him. But, [*Smiling and holding up his finger*] remember, Joey, when I come down here again, don't let me hear any more about what foolish people say, about still more foolish superstitions.

[*Exits R. up steps.*]

*Joey* Well, Master George, I'm glad to see you take it easy. I'm muddled and mollencholly, I grant you, but I'm an old servant of Pebbleson Nephew, and I wish you well through all on your troubles, and that there mistake in the champagne, as well. There weren't no mistakes in the time of Pebbleson Nephew, that ever I heard on. Sometimes one mistake leads to another, a man drops a bit of

orange peel on the pavement by mistake, and a job at the hospital, and a party crippled for life. I wish you well out of it, Master George, and I'm glad you take it easy, sir. [*Exits grumbling, at back L.*]

SCENE III.—VENDALE'S *Counting Room*. *Same Scene as in Act I.* VEN-DALE and BINTREY discovered *sitting at table*.

*Bint* [*Referring to a note book.*] My report is soon made. In accordance with the late Mr. Wilding's wish, expressed so earnestly, we have left no means untried, to discover the true heir to the property. We have kept an advertisement, at intervals, flowing through the newspapers, cautiously inviting any person who may know anything about that adopted infant, taken from the Foundling Hospital, to come to my office. No one has appeared.

*Ven* And your inquires at the Hospital?

*Bint* The Treasurer gave me every aid in his power. We consulted the books together, and I have here a copy of the entry! [*Reads*] 3rd March, 1836. Adopted and removed from the Foundling Hospital, a male infant, named, Walter Wilding. Name of the person adopting the child, Mrs. Jane Ann Miller, Widow; Address, Lime Tree Lodge, Groombridge Wells. References, the Revd. Jno. Harker, Groombridge Wells, and Messrs Giles, Jeremie and Giles, Bankers, Lombard Street.

*Ven* What did you do, after obtaining this?

*Bint* I called upon Giles, Jeremie and Giles, the Bankers in the City. After some trouble, they opened the ledger account of Mrs. Miller: two long lines, in faded ink, were drawn across it and at the bottom of the page, there was this note: [*Reads.*] "Account closed, September 30th, 1837." No THOROUGHFARE, in that direction.

*Ven* Well, what did you do then?

*Bint* I then proceeded to Mrs. Miller's residence, Groombridge Wells—and, after many inquiries, found the Revd. Mr. Harker's residence changed to a hotel. Mrs. Miller was dead.

*Ven* And Mr. Harker?

*Bint* The reverend gentleman had furnished a savory meal to a party of hungry aborigines of New Zealand. No THOROUGHFARE that way, either!

*Ven* Defeated in every direction!

*Bint* Precisely! defeated in every direction!

*Ven* Well, Mr. Bintrey, I have to thank you for your zeal, both on my account and on that of my poor dead friend. Have you any other suggestion to offer?

*Bint* [*Rising, putting up note-book and taking his hat.*] None, my dear Mr. Vendale—not one—I am completely baffled—I must say that to this perplexing business, there is No THOROUGHFARE—I wish you good day.

*Ven* Good day and thanks!

[BINTREY *exits door L.*]

*Ven* I cannot fathom this mystery; the thought that has sometimes crossed my mind, often returns; that Obenreizer may be the man we are seeking. His doubts as to his origin. The very doubt



he entertains of his nationality. Of the same age as poor Wilding. Brought up in Switzerland. The arrival of the letter, introducing him to us, simultaneously with Mrs. Goldstraw's story. These are chances worth considering. The revival of our acquaintance. All are strange links which should form a chain of facts, and yet they fail, I know not where—I can make nothing of them. [*Knock at door in flat.*] Come in!

*Enter JARVIS, with a bundle of letters.*

*Jarvis* The afternoon's letters, sir.

*Ven* [Thank you! [*Takes letters, JARVIS exits door in flat.*] The Neuchâtel post-mark. More trouble. [*Opens and reads.*] Your discovery that the forged receipt for five hundred pounds is executed upon one of our numbered and printed forms, has caused inexpressible distress to us. When your remittance was stolen, there were but three keys opening the strong box in which our receipt forms are kept. My partner had one, I another. The third was in the possession of a gentleman who, at that period, held a position of trust in our house. We should as soon have thought of suspecting one of ourselves, as of suspecting him; nevertheless, suspicion now points at him. The handwriting on your receipt must be compared by competent persons, with certain specimens in our possession. I beg you to send me the receipt to Neuchâtel; and in making this request, I must accompany it by a word of necessary warning. If the person at whom suspicion points really prove to be the one who has committed this forgery and theft, I have reason to fear that he is already on his guard. The only evidence against him is in your hands, and he will move heaven and earth to obtain and destroy it. I strongly urge you not to trust the receipt to the post. Send it to me without loss of time, by a private hand, and choose nobody for your messenger but a person long established in your employment, accustomed to traveling, capable of speaking French; a man of courage, honesty, and, above all things, a man who can be trusted to let no stranger scrape acquaintance with him on the route. The safe transit of the receipt may depend on your interpreting *literally* this advice. Rolland, signing for Dufreisner & Co."—A man of courage and honesty, accustomed to travel, and speaking French? I must go myself. Who can this man be that Dufreisner & Co. have been so much deceived in? Can it—no—no—impossible! It will be too provoking to have to leave Marguerite; but I see no way out of it. I must go. [*Looks at letter again.*] There is no help but to go myself.

[*Crosses to flat, opens door of strong room, pulls out drawer and places letter in it. As he turns he sees OBERREIZER, who has entered door L.*

*Ven* Take a seat, Mr. Oberreizer. I have to thank you for your punctuality.

*Ober* [*Sitting.*] Don't speak of it, dear sir.

*Ven* [*After a constrained pause.*] Well, sir?

*Ober* I have spoken to my niece. I find, Mr. Vendale, that even your influence has not entirely blinded her to the social objections to your proposal.

*Ven* May I ask if that is the only result of your interview with Marguerite?

*Oben* You are master of the situation. I admit it—your influence over my niece is now greater than mine. I admit that!

*Ven* Well, sir, proceed.

*Oben* I submit with my best grace, on certain conditions. Let us revert to the statement of your pecuniary position. I have an objection to you, my dear sir; a most audacious objection from a man in my position to a gentleman in yours.

*Ven* What is it?

*Oben* You have honored me by a proposal for my niece's hand. For the present, with best thanks and respects, I beg to decline it.

*Ven* Why?

*Oben* Because you are not rich enough.

*Ven* Not rich enough!

*Oben* In my miserable country I should fall on my knees, and say "What a princely fortune!" In wealthy England, I sit as I am, and say, a modest independence, dear sir, nothing more.

*Ven* Come to the point, you view this question as a question of terms. What are your terms?

*Oben* To raise your wife to social position I deem necessary for her to attain, you must double your present income. On the day when you can satisfy me, by plain proofs, that your income is three thousand pounds a year, ask me for my niece's hand and it is yours.

*Ven* May I inquire if you have mentioned this arrangement to Marguerite?

*Oben* Certainly. She has a last little morsel of regard still left for me, Mr. Vendale, which is not yours, and she accepts my terms. In other words, she submits to be guided by her guardian's regard for her welfare, and by his superior knowledge of the world.

*Ven* [After a pause] I protest against the conditions you impose upon me.

*Oben* Naturally. I dare say I should protest, myself, in your place. What else?

*Ven* Your objection to my income has taken me by surprise. I wish to be assured against any repetition of that surprise. Your present views of my qualifications for marriage require me to have an income of three thousand a year; can I be certain in the future, as your experience of England enlarges, that your estimate will rise no higher?

*Oben* In plain English, you doubt me?

*Ven* Do you propose to take my word for it, when I inform you that I have doubled my income? If my memory does not deceive me, you stipulated, a minute since, for plain proofs.

*Oben* Well played, Mr. Vendale! You combine the foreign quickness with the English solidity. Accept my best congratulations. Accept also my written guaranty. [Turns and writes, and hands paper to VENDALE when finished.] Are you satisfied with my guaranty?

*Ven* [Having read paper.] I am satisfied. Within a year we shall be married.

*Oben* Charmed to hear it I am sure. We have had our little skirmish, we have really been wonderfully clever on both sides. For the present our affairs are settled. I bear no malice, you bear no malice. Come, Mr. Vendale, a good English shake-hands. [*They shake hands.*] And now tell me, my dear sir, have you received any letter from Neuchâtel? Any more news of the forged receipt for five hundred pounds?

*Ven* I have just received a very strange letter. The matter has taken a new turn, and the letter insists, without excepting anybody, on my keeping our next proceeding secret.

*Oben* [*Turning thoughtfully to window.*] "Without excepting anybody." [*After a pause.*] Surely they must have forgotten or they would have excepted me?

*Ven* It is Monsieur Rolland who writes, and as you say, he must have forgotten; that view of the matter quite escaped me. I was just wishing I had you to consult, when you came into the room, and here I am, tied by a formal prohibition, which cannot possibly have been intended to include you. How very annoying.

*Oben* [*Watching VENDALE attentively.*] Perhaps it is more than annoying. I came, not only to hear the news and to keep my appointment, but to offer myself as messenger, negotiator, what you will. Would you believe it? I have letters which oblige me to go to Switzerland immediately. Messages, documents, anything, I could have taken them all to Defreisner & Co. for you.

*Ven* You are the very man I wanted. I had determined, most unwillingly, on going myself, not five minutes since, because I could find no one here, capable of taking my place. Let me look at the letter again.

[*Goes to strong room, takes out letter and looks at it. OBenREIZER watches him narrowly, as if considering whether to attack him, and then turns away to the fire.*

*Oben* [*Aside.*] No! the risk would be too great!

*Ven* [*Putting letter in his breast pocket.*] It is most annoying. Mr. Rolland's forgetfulness places me in an absurdly false position towards you. I have no choice but to be guided, not by the spirit, but by the letter of my instructions. You understand me, I am sure? You know if I had not been fettered in this way, how gladly I should have accepted your services?

*Oben* Say no more! In your place I should have done the same. My good friend, I take no offense. I thank you for your compliment. We shall be traveling companions, at any rate! you go, as I go, at once!

*Ven* By the first mail train.

*Oben* I will go for my portmanteau, and be with you in five minutes. Now, not another word, or I shall feel offended.

[*Hurries out door L. VENDALE takes up books and papers and goes to place them in strong-room, his back is to audience—JOEY conducting MARGUERITE, appears at door in flat.*

*Joey* [*Aside to her.*] He's there, Miss. Oh, come now, don't be a thanking of me, for bringing you in at the side door. Lord love

you, as I have told 'em a many times, after a hearing of your singing, "You may all on ye go to bed, arter that" and I'll do anything for you. He's there!

[*Exits door in flat. At noise, VENDALE turns, closes strong room, and sees MARGUERITE.*

*Ven* Marguerite, you here? What happiness.

*Mar* I was behind that door, waiting until my guardian should leave you. I overheard the arrangement for your journey.

*Ven* Dear Marguerite—

*Mar* We have only a few moments, George. Madame Dor has been good to me, and we can have those few moments alone. [*Eagerly clasping his arm.*] Have you done anything to offend Mr. Obenreizer?

*Ven* I?

*Mar* Hush! I want to whisper it. You know the little photograph I have of you?—This afternoon it happened to be on the chimney-piece. He took it up and looked at it, and I saw his face in the glass. I know you have offended him! He is merciless! He is revengeful! He is as secret as the grave! Don't go with him, George! Don't go with him!

*Ven* My own love, you are letting your fancy frighten you! Obenreizer and I were never better friends than we are at this moment.

*Mar* But for all that, George, don't go with him! Don't go!

*Ven* I cannot withdraw from his company now, and I myself *must* go this very day. Come, come, compose yourself. One kiss before he returns. [*Kisses her.*] Have no fears.

*Mar* Hark! that is his step! Conceal me somewhere. Joey will see me home. Oh, George, don't go with him! Pray don't go with him!

*Ven* Quick! Here! Farewell, dearest!

[*Kisses her, raises window curtains, she gets behind them, just as OBERREIZER enters door L, in traveling dress.*

*Oben* [*To VENDALE, who has gathered up his coat, &c., tapping him on the breast.*] *En route*, my friend, for Neuchâtel!

*They exeunt door L—OBERREIZER first. Just as they are gone, JOEY enters door in flat, and MARGUERITE comes from behind curtains.*

*Mar* He has gone with him! He is lost! [*Faints in JOEY's arms.*

QUICK DROP.

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### ACT III.

*Apartment in a Swiss Inn. Dark paneled room; wood fire in set fire place R.; near R. C.—against the flat, a bedstead. Door and window in L. flat; at L. a set door with rude clumsy latch. Light from the fire so as to cast a shadow (in the L. corner of scene) of VENDALE when sitting*

*in front of hearth. Rude table, chairs and lounge ; candle burning on table ; music.*

[OBENREIZER, VENDALE, LANDLORD and two GUIDES discovered : waiter removing dinner things from table.

*Landlord* You had better listen, gentlemen, to the advice of these men ; they know what they are talking about ; no human creature has crossed the pass for four days.

*First Guide* Yes, gentlemen, that's the truth. The snow above the snow-line is too soft for wheels, and not hard enough for a sledge !

*Second Guide* [*Looking from the window.*] And see, sirs, there is snow in the sky.

*Land* And has been for days past ; it is a marvel that it has not fallen.

*First G* But it must fall !

*Ven* Do you then refuse to guide us ?

*First G* No, sir, we don't say that. We will guide you, but we must have danger-price.

*Second G* Whether we take you across or have to turn back for safety.

*Oben* [*To VENDALE.*] The trade of these poor devils ; how they stick to their trade ! You Englishmen say we Swiss are mercenary. Truly it does look like it. We want no guide.

*First G* Well, gentlemen, what do you say ?

*Oben* This is what I say. We want no guide who might be for turning back. This gentleman—

*Ven* Has very pressing occasion to get across--

*Oben* You hear—has very pressing occasion to get across—must cross. We want no advice and no help. I am mountain born, and will act as guide. Now don't worry us, but leave us to ourselves. Where is my room, Landlord ?

*Land* This one, sir.

[*Points to door L.*

[*The GUIDES have gone up to door in flat, conversing. FIRST GUIDE comes down.*

*First G* Well, gentlemen, as you have made up your minds, we have nothing to complain of. Remember there are five places of shelter, near together, on the dangerous road before you, and there is the wooden cross and the next Hospice.

*Second G* Do not stray from the track.

*First G* If the *Tourmente* comes on, take shelter instantly. Good night !

*Second G* Good night !

*Ven* Thanks, friends ! Good night !

*Oben* Landlord, remember to call us at four.

*Land* I shall be sure, gentlemen, to attend to your commands ; and although I wish you had accepted these men's services—

*Oben* Enough, Landlord, our minds are made up—I am guide.



[LANDLORD bows and exits, with GUIDES and WAITER, door flat. VENDALE and OBERREIZER sit near fire.

Ober Bah ! I am weary of these poor devils and their trade. Always the same story. All we want we have, a mountain staff each, a couple of knapsacks. We leave our portmanteaus here, and we cross together. We have been on the mountains before now, and I am mountain born, and I know this pass—pass—say rather, high road—by heart ! Let these poor devils trade with others—their fears and alarms are so many pretexts for earning money. Yet, once for all, *must* this journey be continued ?

Ven I have a very serious matter in charge ; more of these missing forms may be turned to as bad account or worse ; I am urged to lose no time in helping the house to take the thief, and nothing shall turn me back.

Ober [Taking his hand.] Then nothing shall turn *me* back. We will go on !

Ven Don't you think we have been rather rash in refusing these men ?

Ober I am your guide and will guide you to your journey's end.

Ven We might have been spared this extra traveling had Mr. Rolland not been taken ill, or had Defreisner remained at Neuchâtel, instead of posting off to Milan.

Ober [Rises and walks nervously and anxiously up and down the room, gets finally near the window.] The night wind sounds like the old waterfall at home, when I was a pupil of the watchmaker. I remember it as sometimes saying to me, for whole days, "Who are you, my little wretch ?" At other times its sound was hollow, and it seemed to say, "Beat him, beat him !" Like my mother enraged—if she was my mother ?

Ven [Turning round in his chair.] If she was ? If she was, why do you say if ?

Ober What do I know ? What would you have ? I am so obscurely born, that, how can I say ? I was very young, and all the others were men and women, and my so-called parents were old. Anything is possible in a case like that.

Ven Did you doubt— ?

Ober [Throwing up his hands in the air.] I told you once, I doubt the marriage of those two. But here I am in creation. I come of no fine family, what does it matter ? [He walks up and down.

Ven [Watching him.] At least you are Swiss ?

Ober How do I know ? I say to you, at least you are English. How do you know ?

Ven By what I have been told from infancy.

Ober Ah, I know of myself that way.

Ven And by my earliest recollection.

Ober I also, I know of myself that way if that satisfies—

Ven Does it not satisfy you ?

Ober It must. There is nothing like "*It must*" in this little world. "*It must*," two short words those, but stronger than long proofs or reasoning.

[Pacing up and down.

*Ven* You and poor Wilding were born in the same year, you were nearly of an age?

*Oben* Yes, very nearly.

*Ven* [*Aside.*] Can this be the man? [*Falls into a reverie.*]

*Oben* [*Aside, looking at VENDALE.*] Where shall I rob him, if I can, where shall I—I must have that receipt—I must save myself by it, or I am lost beyond hope! [*Aloud.*] Well, I must get a few minutes' sleep. Do you lock your door?

*Ven* Not I—I sleep too soundly.

*Oben* You are so sound a sleeper—what a blessing.

*Ven* Anything but a blessing to the rest of the house, if I have to be roused from the outside of my bedroom door.

*Oben* I too leave open my room. But let me advise you, as a Swiss who knows, always when you travel in my country, put your papers—and of course your money—under your pillow—always the same place.

*Ven* [*Laughing.*] You are not complimentary to your countrymen.

*Oben* My countrymen, [*Touching VENDALE's elbows*] I suppose, are like the majority of men, and the majority of men will take what they can get. Adieu! At four!

*Ven* Adieu! At four!

OBERREIZER exits door L. VENDALE, after making up the fire, sits near it, in such a position as to cast a shadow on L wall.

*Ven* I have no inclination to sleep. I wonder what Marguerite is doing—poor girl.—What could she have meant by her caution to me about Oberreizer—those old thoughts of mine are strengthened by his speech.—The coincidences are wonderful. What can be the reason of his objection to my suit for Marguerite's hand? Can I have a rival in him?—and yet his manner betrays no such feeling—his address to her is deferential. What secret and unjust suspicions fill my mind against this man—when he speaks they are all dispersed, but in his silence and thoughtfulness they return. I prefer his speech to his silence. Should I like this man to be the real Wilding? No! Argue with myself as I may, I should not like such a substitute in place of my late guileless, outspoken, childlike partner—no—no—Oberreizer will not do in poor Walter's place. [*Music. The candle goes out, he looks round for another, and in doing so notices the shadow. Stage darker.*] Why, that shadow on the wall is very unlike my own, and not unlike a dreamy one of poor Wilding's.

[*He moves his seat to the end of the bed. The shadow disappears. A pause.*]

The latch of the door L is seen gradually to lift; the door then opens a very little. A pause. Then, whilst VENDALE watches it, the door opens softly, and OBERREIZER, in his shirt with the sleeves rolled up, and in his pantaloons and stocking feet, with a dagger in his girdle, enters very cautiously.]

*Oben* [*In a hoarse whisper.*] Vendale! [*After a pause, when in c. of Stage.*] Vendale!

*Ven* [*Springing from his seat.*] What now? Who is it?

*Oben* [*Starts, then rushes forward and clutches VENDALE's shoulders.*] Ah!

Ven What is it ?

Oben Not in bed ? Then something is wrong.

Ven [*Releasing himself.*] What do you mean

Oben First tell me, are you ill ?

Ven Ill ! No !

Oben I have had a bad dream about you. How is it I see you up and dressed ?

Ven I might as well ask *you* that question.

Oben I have told you why. I have had a bad dream about you. I tried to rest after it, but found it impossible ; I could not make up my mind to stay where I was, without knowing you were safe ; and yet I could not make up my mind to come in here—I have been minutes hesitating at the door. [*VENDALE laughs.*] It is so easy to laugh at a dream that you have not dreamed. Where is your candle ?

Ven Burnt out.

Oben I have one in my room, shall I fetch it ?

Ven Do so.

O BENREIZER crosses to the door L, exits, and returns with a candle, which he carries to the hearth R, stoops down, blows a flame, and lights candle. Stage light. VENDALE watches him.

Ven Your lips are white—you tremble.

Oben Yes ! It was a bad dream.—Only look at me. If there had been a wrestle with a robber, as I dreamed, you see I was ready for it.

Ven And armed, too !

Oben A traveler's dagger, that I always carry on the road. [*Half draws it and replaces it.*] Do you carry no such thing ?

Ven Nothing of the kind.

Oben No pistols ?

[*Looking at table, then at pillow on bed.*]

Ven Nothing of the sort.

Oben You Englishmen are so confident. You wish to sleep ?

Ven I have wished to sleep this long time, but can't do it !

Oben I neither, after the bad dream. My fire has gone the way of your candle ; may I come in and sit by yours ? It is so late now, it is not worth the trouble of going to bed.

Ven I shall not go to bed at all—sit here and keep me company.

Oben One moment, till I fetch my cloak. [*Crosses and exits door L. VENDALE puts wood on fire. O BENREIZER returns with a drinking flask ; he has put on a cloak and slippers. O BENREIZER filling the flask cup.*] Common Cabaret brandy, I am afraid, bought upon the road, and not like yours from Cripple Corner. But yours is exhausted, so much the worse. A cold night, a cold time of night, a cold country, and a cold house. This may be better than nothing—try it.

[*VENDALE drinks.*]

Oben How do you find it ?

Ven [*Putting down the cup with a slight shudder.*] It has a coarse after-flavor, and I don't like it !

Oben [*Tasting and smacking his lips.*] You are right, it has a coarse after-flavor and I don't like it. [*Flinging the remains of the cup in the fire, it flames up.*] Booh ! it burns, though !

[*They both sit leaning on the table, OBENREIZER watching VENDALE, who gradually becomes heavy with slumber, and finally, whilst speaking, falls asleep.*

Ven [*Dreamily.*] It will soon be time to start—wont it? Poh! that brandy—what a—coarse—after—taste it—has—[*Putting his hand to his breast pocket.*] A great nuisance that—that—Defreisner—should—should—be in—in—where is he?—ah,—true,—Milan—never mind—we'll cross—the—pass—Marguerite—I wonder—what she is—thinking—

[*Falls fast asleep.*

OBENREIZER assures himself of this, then darts to bed, raises the pillow and searches for papers,—not finding any, glances round the room; hesitates—finally crosses gently to VENDALE, and as he is in the act of putting his hand to his breast-pocket, a loud knocking is heard, at door in flat.

Landlord [*Outside.*] Four o'clock, gentlemen! Four o'clock!

Oben Malediction!

[*Picture closed in by.*

SCENE II.—*In first grooves, very early morning. The Court-yard of the Hospice. Enter TWO PORTERS of the Hospice, from L., with ropes, etc.*

First Porter We may venture now!

[*Fastening a basket on his back, the other does the same. They both carry strong spiked poles.*

Second P The weather is still bad. The *Tourmente* is abroad—look how it sweeps along the gorge.

First P No matter, let us be off. The dogs are waiting. Have we everything we need?

Second P Yes, good Father Paul saw to that.

First P Well, let us be off. Stay, [*Looking off R.*] what is that coming up the path?

Second P Two mad creatures. Is it possible in such weather?

First P And one of them a woman?

Second P A woman! impossible!

First P See for yourself—they are here!

*Enter from R. MARGUERITE and JOEY, in traveling costume—JOEY very much exhausted.*

Mar Are we in time?

First P What do you mean?

Mar We are in search of two gentlemen: we have followed them almost to this place, but lost them in the course of last evening.

First P Then they have avoided the Hospice—We have seen no one. We were about to start on our usual journey to help any travelers needing aid, and were only delayed by the *Tourmente*. You and your friend will receive every comfort here.

Mar Dear guides, dear friends of travelers, let us go with you. The two gentlemen we seek must be in some part of the pass.

Second P In such weather!—impossible!

Mar Oh, no, no!—You must let us go with you.

First P See, Miss, your companion is quite exhausted.

Joey [*Faintly.*] If my master is in danger, Miss, it's my duty to follow him; and its more than my duty to follow you.



*Mar* Oh, let me go with you ! let me go with you ! for the love of God ! One of these gentlemen is to be my husband. I love him, oh, so dearly ! You see I am not faint, you see I am not tired I am born a peasant girl. They will be lost—he will be lost. Let me go with you ; I will show you that I know well how to fasten myself to your ropes.—I will do it with my own hands.—I will swear to be brave and good—but let me go with you ! let me go with you ! If any mischance should have befallen him, my love would find him when nothing else could. On my kness, let me go with you ! By the love your dear mothers had for your fathers, let me go with you !—let me go !

*First P* [*To SECOND PORTER.*] After all she speaks but the truth. She knows the ways of the mountains. See how marvelously she has come here. But this gentleman, Miss—

*Mar* Dear Mr. Joey, you will remain at the house here, and wait for me, will you not ?

*Joey* [*Looking at the PORTERS indignantly.*] If I know'd which o' you recommended it, I'd fight you for sixpence, and give you half-a-crown towards your expenses. No, Miss ; I'll stick by you as long as there's any sticking left in me, and I'll die for you when I can't do better.

*First P* This gentleman, Miss, not being so well acquainted with the dangers of our lives, puts his own ability to meet them, perhaps, at too high a value.

*Joey* Well, never you mind how high I puts them, provided they don't trouble you. Once for all, are ye a going to take this here lady and myself in search of the two gentlemen ?

*First P* Has Miss observed the effects of the last *Tourmente*. Here they were frightful.

*Mar* Whilst we stand here talking, perhaps he is in danger—perhaps both are lost.

*First P* But the risk is very great to you, Miss, and although I, for one, would gladly aid you, I cannot do so without the Superior's consent. That obtained, we will help you all in our power.

*Mar* And to see him ?

*First P* I will take you with me to him, You can plead your own request better than any one else.

*Mar* Oh ! pray, pray take me to him at once. You, Joey, remain here—I shall not be long. My heart beats now with anxiety to be upon the road. Good friend, lead me to your Superior.

*First P* This way then, Miss. [*They exeunt, L.*]

*Joey* These here men are rough to look at, but they're a good brand—As for her, she's a hangel, that's what she is, and I know it. I say, mister, you have but a lonely life up here, haven't you ?

*Second P* Lonely ! Have we not our dogs ?

*Joey* What, them big animals as I saw outside a rolling in the snow, and tossing on it up with their paws ?

*Second P* It is their way of expressing their joy at being let out.

*Joey* Well, every one to their taste ; perhaps they takes theirs in at the pores too, who knows. I don't care if after this here business is



over, and Miss an' Master safe at home, if I don't never see no more passes nor gorges, nor grand mullets, nor nothing o' the sort. Once in a life-time's enough for Joey Laddle—"Cripple Court," although it ain't got No THROUGHFARE, is good enough for him, for the rest of his life, wapors and all. Ah, here's Miss Marguerite.

[MARGUERITE enters L. with FIRST P.

Mar All is well, my dear Mr. Joey, we have the Superior's permission. Let us depart at once, and pray God we may find them.

Joey With all my heart, Miss.

Mar I am afraid, my dear friend, I'm taxing your endurance heavily.

Joey Not another word, Miss—I know only one thing as will keep me up, and I ain't likely to forget it, and that's Duty. So have no fears for Joey, as long as he can put one foot afore another.

Mar Brave heart! Brave heart!

[Music.

[They exeunt followed by the PORTERS, R. II.

SCENE III.—*The gallery in the mountains. A narrow ledge running round a huge rock, extending to C. of the stage, under which is a cavern. This is on the left hand of the stage, and the gallery itself rises gradually up towards the back, where it turns round and off. It is a considerable height from the stage, and goes off at the L. entrance. It and the cavern are practicable. Beneath the gallery, the sledge should be cut in a large hole, or masked with black and dark cloths to represent an immense ravine, masked in by a very low set piece of ice and snow. The back drop is painted to represent a wild and desolate spot in the Alps, gloomy and covered with snow. At the opening of the scene, the snow is falling, whirled into circling flights by the wind, imitating in this way the "TOURMENTE." The wind whistles, and from time to time the noise of falling masses of snow from the mountains into the valleys is heard, like distant thunder. Music descriptive of the above effects. The lights low. After a pause, OBENREIZER and VENDALE are seen to appear on the gallery from the L. side, walking with difficulty, aided by their Alpine Stocks, and shielding themselves from the wind and snow.*

Oben [Stopping near the mouth of the cavern.] Help me with my knapsack. We had better pause here and gain breath before going on. Pooh! the "Tourmente" is fierce this morning. This cavern affords some slight shelter.

Ven [Unbuckling OBENREIZER's knapsack.] I'm half numbed with cold and sleep. I must lie down and rest.

Oben [Walking up and down.] Sleep would be eternal here.

Ven Then let us on! [Approaching the extreme end of the gallery where it turns round the rock, a whirling blast of wind seeming to drive him back.] It is impossible; I cannot see for the snow, which blinds me; I cannot hold my feet.

Oben [Holding out flask.] Here—oh, don't be afraid, it's not that vile brandy—'tis sherry—drink! [VENDALE drinks, OBENREIZER appears to do so too, but throws it over his shoulder.] We shall be detained here a couple of hours. The wind will not subside sooner. [A pause—aside.] It works already.

Ven [*Staggering as if drunk.*] What can this feeling be? The place appears to spin round. What is it you have given me to drink?

Oben That which gives me power over you. The hour is come! [*He grapples with VENDALE, who, after a struggle, succeeds in throwing him off.*]

Ven [*During struggle.*] Ah, the dagger! the dagger! [*Blindly clutches for it, and at last succeeds in pulling it from OBENREIZER's waist; he then makes many stabs at him, but feebly, owing to the effects of the wine. OBENREIZER and he are now standing apart.*] What does this mean, wretch? [*He leans against the rock.*]

Oben I promised to guide you to your journey's end, and I have kept my promise. The journey of your life ends here. Nothing can prolong it. You are sleeping as you stand.

Ven You are a villain—what have you done to me?

Oben You are a fool—I have drugged you—you are doubly a fool, for I drugged you last night to try you, and the effects are still upon you; you are trebly a fool, for I am the thief and forger, and in a few moments I shall take those proofs against the thief and forger from your insensible body.

Ven [*Trying to throw off his lethargy.*] Where am I? Who is it that speaks to me? Whose blood is that upon the snow? What have you done to me, Obenreizer? What have I done to you—that you should be—so base—a murderer—

Oben Done to me? You would have destroyed me, but that you have come to your journey's end! Your cursed activity interposed between me and the time I had counted on in which I might have replaced the money. Done to me!—You have come in my way—not once—not twice—but again and again and again! Did I try to shake you off in the beginning, or no? You were not to be shaken off! Done to me?—You would wed MARGUERITE!—Therefore you die!

Ven [*Trying to speak coherently.*] Die here!—What does it mean? Who says I must die here? [*Tries to pick up his Alpine stock, but fails to do so; then tries to stagger on, but stops and stumbles; then, when on the ground, makes a vigorous effort and supports himself on his hands.*]

Oben [*Laughing grimly.*] You call me murderer. The name matters but very little. But at least I have set my life against yours; for I am surrounded by dangers, and may never make my way out of this place. Hark! [*The wind heard whistling.*] The *Tourmente* is rising again.—The snow is on the whirl. I must have the papers now.—Every moment has my life in it. [*Advancing.*]

Ven [*Starting up with an immense effort, and speaking in a loud, clear voice*] Stop! [*OBENREIZER stands amazed; then makes a rush at him, and tries to clutch the papers from his breast pocket. VENDALE seizes his hands.*] Stop! Stand away from me! [*Pushes OBENREIZER from him.*] Stand away from me! God bless my Marguerite! Happily she will never know how I died. Stand off from me and let me look at your murderous face! Let it remind me of something—left to say—[*Glaring wildly at OBENREIZER, who stands powerless to move.*] It shall not be—the trust—of the dead—betrayed by me—reputed parents—misinherited

fortune—see to it—[*He falls, his head on his breast ; OBENREIZER bends to him ; the moment he puts his hand on VENDALE's breast, VENDALE screams out*] NEVER ! [*and rolls himself off the gallery into the ravine below. A pause.*]

[OBENREIZER makes one movement as if to look over ; then, as if giddy and conscience stricken, starts back and leans against the rock ; then staggers off round rock at back. The stage gradually darkens, the snow comes down with great density ; the wind is heard moaning, and the Tourmente seems to be at its height. A pause. Then from the L. enter MARGUERITE, two PORTERS and JOEY. (*If two St. Bernard dogs can be obtained and used, the effect would be greatly enhanced ; they should carry cloths and a canteen, as in pictures.*) The characters appear to have great difficulty in making their way along the gallery, and are fastened together with ropes, in the following order : FIRST PORTER, MARGUERITE, SECOND PORTER, JOEY. *If the dogs are used, the following is the business for them : For some time the scene is in pantomime, descriptive music being played. One of the dogs approaches as if by scent, to the ledge of the precipice, over which VENDALE has fallen, and after several times round, to and fro, makes a set with fore legs extended over the very spot ; the other dog, tearing at the snow, then imitates the action : both howl. If the dogs are not used, the FIRST PORTER fills up the business of finding the traces, and seems to track the course by the blood. When once the spot is assured, the action proceeds thus :*

*Mar* There is some one lying below.

*First P* I think so. Stand well inward the last two, and let us look over.

[*The SECOND PORTER takes the two torches from his basket, and with some trouble lights them in cave ; and whilst the SECOND PORTER and JOEY stand well toward the cavern, MARGUERITE and the FIRST PORTER lean over, move their torches R. and L. and seem to try to peer into the gloom of the abyss. After some time, MARGUERITE utters a piercing shriek.*]

*Mar* Ah ! my God ! on a projecting point, where a wall of ice stretches forward, over the torrent, I see a human form.

*First P* Where, Mam'selle, where ?

*Mar* See ! on the shelf of ice below there !

[*The FIRST PORTER draws back—a pause—MARGUERITE quickly detaches herself from the rope.*]

*Mar* Show me the baskets. These two are the only ropes ?

[*Looking at baskets which the PORTERS have placed on the ground.*]

*First P* The only ropes here, Mam'selle, but at the Hospice—

*Mar* If he is now alive—I know it is my lover—he will be dead before you can return. Dear guides ! Blessed friends to travelers ! Look at me—watch my hands. [*Beginning to fix the ropes rapidly about her body, making a sort of frame.*] Watch my hands ; if they falter or go wrong, make me your prisoner by force. If they are steady and go right, help me to save him.

[*Fixes the rope during speech, around herself. JOEY falls insensible.*]

*First P* She is inspired.

*Mar* By heaven's mercy ! you both know I am by far the lightest here ! Give me the brandy and wine, [*They give them*] and lower me\*

down to him. Then go for assistance, and a stronger rope. You see that when it is lowered to me—look at this about me now—I can make it fast and safe to his body. Alive or dead I will bring him up, or die with him. I love him passionately. Can I say more? [*Hangs kegs about her. Whilst speaking she has been nervously arranging ropes, etc. about her.*] Lower me down to him. [*They pause.*] I am a peasant and know no giddiness or fear, and this is nothing to me, and I passionately love him. Lower me down to him, or I will dash myself to pieces!

*First P* Mam'selle, he must be dying or dead.

*Mar* Dying or dead, my husband's head shall lie upon my breast!

[*A short pause—the PORTERS then seize the rope and gradually lower her down, she steadying herself. FIRST PORTER lies down on the snow, leaning over the edge. SECOND PORTER holds torch over the abyss.*]

*First P* Is it really he, and is he dead? [*A pause.*]

*Mar* [*Below.*] He is insensible, but his heart beats against mine!

[*Second Porter fixes one torch in the snow, and starts off the gallery L. If dogs are used they follow.*]

*First P* How does he lie? [*A pause.*]

*Mar* [*Below.*] Upon a ledge of ice. It has thawed beneath him, and it will thaw beneath me—hasten. If we die, I am content.

[*FIRST PORTER turns to JOEY, and uses efforts to recover him, pouring brandy down his throat, etc.*]

*Joey* [*After a pause. Delirious.*] Aye—in at the pores—that's how I takes it—yes, they do say—fungus on a man's breast—he'll surely die of MURDER—he had it on—young Mr. Vendale of Cripple Court—No THOROUGHFARE—Arter her singing—Lor' bless ye, ye may all on ye get to bed arter that.

*FIRST PORTER returns to edge of abyss. JOEY is seen to recover slowly.*

*First P* Courage! They will soon be here! How goes it?

[*A pause.*]

*Mar* [*Below.*] His heart still beats against mine! I warm him in my arms! I cast off the rope, for the ice melts under us, and the rope would separate me from him; but I am not afraid!

[*A long pause, during which FIRST PORTER looks anxiously off L., and also at JOEY.*]

*Joey* [*Wandering.*] Eh?—Where am I?—Ah, I was always too much down among the wapers.—Eh!—yes, that's it—we never had no mistake with Pebbleson Nephew. But you're too young, Mr. Vendale—that's what it is!—You calls that there saying about fungus, stupid—well, perhaps it is—

*First P* [*At abyss.*] How goes it? [*A pause.*]

*Mar* [*Below.*] We are sinking fast—but his heart still beats against mine!

*A shout is heard, then the SECOND PORTER and the two GUIDES and two PEASANTS with torches, (if dogs are used, they also) enter from L. on gallery. They have ropes, blankets, and wood to kindle a fire; the PEASANTS light the fire in cave; PORTERS and GUIDES uncoil the ropes.*



*First P* [*During the above business.*] Courage ! All is ready. How goes it? [*A long pause.*]

*Mar* [*Below.*] We are sinking still, and we are deadly cold. His heart no longer beats against mine. Let no one come down to add to our weight. Lower the rope only !

[*They lower the rope. The PEASANTS having lighted the fire, lower two lamps. A long pause. All in listening attitudes.*]

*Mar* [*Below.*] Raise softly.

[*They raise VENDALE very slowly. After an interval, he is brought to the gallery, to all appearance, dead. They lay him out on the blankets ; then lowering the rope again, they wait. Another pause.*]

*Mar* [*Below.*] Raise softly.

[*As before they raise and help her to the surface.—She quickly unlooses the rope.*]

*Mar* [*Falling near VENDALE's body, and placing her hand to his breast, and her ear to his lips, she utters a scream.*] Dead ! Dead ! My lover is dead !

PICTURE—MODERATELY SLOW DROP.

#### ACT IV.

SCENE.—*MAITRE VOIGT's Office at Neuchâtel. Door and window in R. flat, backed by a pleasant landscape. In L. flat double sliding-doors of oak, without lock or handle, and studded with nails. To discover, when opened, a tolerably large dark room, round which are shelves filled with books, deed boxes, and papers ; on R. side, behind sliding-doors, a clock with one hand ; beneath it a steel regulator and hand. Doors to slide very evenly and noiselessly open at cue. Stove L. with musical box and cuckoo clock on mantel ; table for office purposes near C. Chairs, pens, ink and papers. Book-case filled with books, R. H. set door R. Time, Noon. MAITRE VOIGT and OBENREIZER, who is in mourning, discovered sitting C.*

*Voigt* [*Kindly.*] Courage, courage, my good fellow—you will begin a new life in my office.

*Oben* [*Placing his hand to his heart.*] The gratitude is here, but the words to express it are not here.

*Voigt* [*Taking snuff out of a very large snuff-box.*] Ta—ta—ta—Don't talk to me about gratitude ! I hate to see a man oppressed. Your father sent me my first client. Do I owe nothing to your father's son ? I owe him a debt of friendly obligation, and I pay it to you.

*Oben* Do me one last favor, sir—Do not act on impulse. Let my claim on your benevolence be recognized by your sound reason, as well as by your excellent heart. In that case, I may hold up my head against the bitterest of my enemies, and build myself a new reputation on the ruins of the character I have lost.

*Voigt* As you will ; you speak well, my son. You will be a fine lawyer one of these days.



*Oben* The details are not many. My troubles begin with the accidental death of my late traveling companion, my lost friend, Mr. Vendale.

*Voigt* Mr. Vendale. Just so—I have heard and read of the name several times within these two months. The name of the unfortunate English gentleman who was killed in the pass. When you got that scar upon your cheek and neck—

*Oben* From my own knife!

*Voigt* From your own knife, and in trying to save him. Good, good, good. That was very good. Vendale! Yes, I have several times thought it droll that I should once have had a client of that name.

*Oben* But the world is so small. [*Aside.*] Had once a client of that name. I must remember that! [*Aloud.*] As I was saying, sir, the death of that dear traveling comrade begins my troubles. What follows? I save myself. I go down to Milan. I am received with coldness by Defreisner & Company. Why? They give no reason why. I ask, do they assail my honor? No answer. I ask, what am I to think? I am told that what I think is of no importance to them. And that is all!

*Voigt* [*Taking snuff.*] Perfectly. That is all!

*Oben* But is that enough, sir?

*Voigt* That is not enough. The House of Defreisner are my townsmen, but they must not silently destroy a man's character. You can rebut assertion. But how can you rebut silence?

*Oben* Your sense of justice, my dear patron, states in a word the cruelty of my case. Does it stop there? No.

*Voigt* [*Nodding.*] True, my dear boy, your ward rebels upon that.

*Oben* Rebels is too soft a word. My ward revolts from me with horror; she withdraws herself from my authority, and, with Madame Dor, takes shelter with that English lawyer, Mr. Bintrey, who replies to your summons for her submission, that she will not submit.

*Voigt* [*Looking amongst papers on table*] And who afterwards writes [*Finding letter*] that he is coming to confer with me.

*Oben* [*Startled*] Indeed! Well, sir, have I no legal rights?

*Voigt* Assuredly, my poor boy.—All but felons have their legal rights.

*Oben* [*Fiercely.*] And who calls me felon?

*Voigt* No one. Be calm under your wrongs.

*Oben* In saying that he is coming to confer with you, this English lawyer means that he is coming to deny my authority over my ward.

*Voigt* You think so?

*Oben* I am sure of it. I know him. He is obstinate and contentious. You will tell me, my dear sir, whether my authority is unassailable, until my ward is of age?

*Voigt* Absolutely unassailable.

*Oben* [*Angrily.*] I will enforce it. I will make her submit herself to it. For [*More quietly*] I owe it to you, sir; to you who have taken an injured man under your protection and into your employment.

*Voigt* Make your mind easy. No more of this now, and no thanks. Give me a few instants whilst I arrange these papers.  
*[Busies himself at table.]*

*Oben* *[Aside.]* He once had a client of the name of Vendale, had he? I ought to know England well enough by this time, and it is not a name I ever encountered there, except *[Looks round nervously]* as his name. Is the world so small that I cannot get away from him, even now when he is dead? He confessed at the last that he had betrayed the trust of the dead and misinherited a fortune.—And I was to see to it.—And I was to stand off that my face might remind him of it. Why *my* face, unless it concerned *me*? I am sure of his words, for they have been in my ears ever since. Can there be anything bearing on them, in the keeping of this old idiot? Anything to repair my fortunes, and blacken his memory? He dwelt upon my earliest remembrances, that night. Why, unless he had a purpose in it?

*Voigt* *[Rising.]* I have business that takes me for a short time from home. I will first put away these municipal papers.

*Oben* *[Aside.]* Ah, the very chance! *[Aloud.]* Can't I save you the trouble, sir? Can't I put those documents away under your directions?

*Voigt* *[Laughing quietly.]* Suppose you try. All my papers of importance are kept yonder.—*[Pointing to doors in flat L.]* O BENREIZER takes the papers, but stands puzzled, seeing no handle to doors.]

*Oben* There is a second door to this room?

*Voigt* No—guess again.

*Oben* There is a window?

*Voigt* No, it has been bricked up. The only way in is by that door. Do you give it up? Listen and tell me if you hear nothing inside?

*Oben* *[Puts his ear to door, then starts back.]* I know! It is the famous clock-lock.

*Voigt* Bravo! The clock-lock it is. People call it Daddy Voigt's folly. Let those laugh who win. No thief can steal *my* keys, no burglar can pick *my* lock. Nothing but gunpowder or a battering-ram can open it. My worthy friend the clock alone can do that, and it is under my control.

*Oben* *[Eagerly.]* May I see it in action? Pardon my curiosity, dear sir! you know I was once a tolerable worker in clocks.

*Voigt* Certainly you shall! See, look at the clock there. *[Pointing to mantel.]* In one minute the doors will open of themselves. Watch them.

*[A minute's pause. The cuckoo clock on mantle sounds twelve. At the end, the doors in flat, L. slide evenly and noiselessly open, disclosing the interior of room. VOIGT takes a lighted taper and goes to doors.]*

*Voigt* *[Proudly.]* You shall see the clock. I possess the greatest curiosity in Europe. See, here it is, on the right hand wall at the side of the door.

*Oben* An ordinary clock. No! not an ordinary clock. It has only one hand.

*Voigt* That one hand goes round the dial. As I put it, so it regulates the hour at which the doors shall open.

*Oben* Does it open more than once in the twenty-four hours?

*Voigt* More than once? A thousand times if I desire, and so regulate this dial. I am now going to set it for opening twelve hours hence. 'Till that time it will remain firmly closed. [*Sets the clock.*]

*Oben* [*Aside*] It must open sooner—it shall—but how? Ah, I have it! [*Aloud, starting.*] Ah!

*Voigt* [*As he is closing the doors.*] What is it?

*Oben* Stop, sir; don't I see something moving among the boxes—on the floor there?

*Voigt* [*Turns to look and OBENREIZER changes the dial.*] 'Tis nothing. Your troubles have shaken your nerves. Some shadow thrown from my taper, or some poor little beetle, who lives among the old lawyer's secrets, running from the light. [*He blows out taper and emerges from the doors, and closes them.*] And now I'll be off to work, and build to-day, the first steps that lead to your new fortune.

[*Takes a pinch of snuff, and exits door in flat.*]

*Oben* [*Nervously lighting the taper.*] Phew! the cold sweat stands on my forehead. What if he should return—for as sure as fate herself, that door will open to a hairbreadth's certainty, when another minute has passed. The risk is awful—He may come back—Ha! was that his step—No, it has passed the other way—I can hear my heart beat—louder [*Putting his ear to the door*] than the clock—Vendale's papers—the same name—an old client—will the time never pass—Ah, it has! it has! [*The doors open noiselessly as before; he speaks whilst they open.*] Ha! ha! Maitre Voigt, your famous clock-lock has for once, been picked—Now for the papers! [*Enters dark room, carrying taper, and hurriedly but carefully inspects every box and labeled parcel. Speaking whilst doing this.*] “Municipal papers”—“CHAPTAL FRERES” [*Music box plays.*] Hush—music? what is it—ah, that idiot's toy—again—was not that a footstep? No—only fancy!—“Simonde and Company”—“Cachat”—It is not here!—Ah! Victory—“VENDALE.” [*Takes box from corner with “VENDALE” painted on it, opens it with the key attached to box, and is on the point of taking out papers, but stops.*] That step? No—no—it is nothing—I thought I heard that voice—“Misinherited fortune”—“see to it”—Bah! I am weak and nervous! [*Pulls out papers and reads them by light of taper.*] What's this? A letter to Mrs. Millar, of Groombridge Wells, England. [*Running over the contents rapidly.*] “From Switzerland—from her married sister—childless for years—she and her husband lonely—have decided on adopting an heir—asks Mrs. Millar to get an infant from the Foundling Hospital—the child to be spared future mortification, to bear her husband's name—to inherit their fortune according to Swiss, not English law—to be brought up as their own—above all to conceal the real name of the adopting parties, from the officials at the Foundling—giving only her own, Jane Ann Millar—and to entrust the child to no other hands than her own, on the journey to Switzerland—” Here is another paper—[*Reads.*] “Memorandum to Swiss lawyer—adopted—Foundling, London, March 3d—male child called “Walter Wilding”—person adopting—Mrs. Millar—acting for her married sister in Switzerland.”—What's here? [*Takes third and fourth paper.*] “Certificate of Dr. Ganz, Neuchâtel—attended child

during sickness, 1838—three months after the death of the gentleman adopting the child.” Another paper? “The mistress, maid and child departed for England—mistress died—” Why, the date is quite recent!—“The maid can swear to the identity of the infant from his childhood to his youth—from youth to manhood—her address is—*[Music box stops.]* Oh, cursed luck that is contained in these papers—I was terribly in error, and so was he—they were not worth—Stay, let me think—*[As he is about to put them back in box]*—no—they may still be turned to some useful purpose—that old idiot will never miss them! *[Puts back the box, after thrusting papers in his breast pocket, blows out the taper, and comes from doorway—closes the doors—wipes the perspiration from his brow, and stands a moment.]* Yes, they may serve me yet—their very existence is forgotten. Ah, they are here!

*Enter VOIGT and BINTREY, door in flat. VOIGT's manner has changed entirely, from a friendly, to a stiff, constrained method of addressing OBENREIZER.*

*Oben* *[Turning cordially to Voigt.]* Ah, my dear benefactor—

*Voigt* Enough, Mr. Obenreizer—here is Mr. Bintrey—We have business with him—be seated. *[Takes snuff. They all sit.]*

*Oben* *[Aside.]* What does this change mean? *[Aloud.]* This gentleman, *[Pointing to BINTREY]* a lawyer, is here to represent an infraction of the law.

*Bint* Admirably put! If all the people I have to deal with, were only like you, what an easy profession mine would be! I am here to represent an infraction of the law—that is your point of view. I am here to make a compromise between you and your niece.

*Oben* There must be two parties to a compromise. I decline in this case to be one of them. The law gives me authority to control my niece's actions until she comes of age. She is not yet of age; and I claim my authority.

*Bint* *[To VOIGT, who is about to speak.]* No, my worthy friend, not a word. Don't excite yourself unnecessarily—leave it to me. *[To OBENREIZER.]* I can think of nothing comparable to you, Mr. Obenreizer, but granite—and even that wears out in course of time. In the interests of peace and quietness—for the sake of your own dignity—relax a little.

*Oben* You are wasting your time and mine. If my niece is not rendered up to my authority within one week from this day, I invoke the law. If you resist the law, I take her by force. *[He rises.]*

*Bint* Have some pity on the poor girl.—Remember how lately she lost her lover by a dreadful death! Will nothing move you?

*Oben* Nothing!

*[BINTREY and VOIGT exchange glances; both look at set door R. OBENREIZER observes them.]*

*Oben* There is somebody listening in there.

*Bint* Yes!

*Oben* Who is it?

*Bint* You shall see! *[In a loud voice.]* Come in!

*The set door R. opens, and MARGUERITE enters. OBENREIZER starts.*



*Oben* [After a pause.] *She here?*

*Bin* Can you listen to her?

*Oben* [Recovering.] I can!

*Mar* You had not left England with Mr. Vendale, twenty-four hours, before I followed my promised husband, with no better companion to protect me than a cellarman in Mr. Vendale's employment.

*Oben* [Anxiously.] Why did you follow me?

*Mar* Because I suspected there had been some serious collision between you and Mr. Vendale, kept secret from me, and because I rightly believed you capable of serving your interests, or satisfying your enmity at the price of a crime. I took the cellarman with me, because he had, though a senseless superstition, connected Mr. Vendale with the idea of danger by MURDER. We two set forth together—Do you understand me?

*Oben* I understand you so far.

*Mar* All you need yet know is that my love and devotion recovered the body of your victim. [OBENREIZER starts in horror.] You had written to Madame Dor. That letter came into Mr. Bintrey's possession. He started for Switzerland, and at once took your case in hand. He furnished Defreisner & Co., the information which secured your discharge from their employment. Having stripped you of your false character, I now proceed to strip you of your authority over me. There is but one certain way of shaking the self-control which makes you formidable, and it is this! [She goes to set door, R., flings it open, and VENDALE, leaning on JOEY, enters. He is very pale and has his arm in a sling. At sight of him, OBENREIZER sinks into a chair, speechless and motionless.] This gentleman was also a listener! [A pause.]

*Voigt* [To BINTREY, aside.] Look at him—Somebody ought to speak to him. Shall I? [BINTREY motions VOIGT to silence.]

*Mar* What remains to be done to set me free, is this: [Takes two slips of paper from BINTREY.] You are guilty of murder, by intention, and you have committed forgery and theft. The evidence is complete. Mr. Bintrey would have preferred to have taken the usual course with you, but he has been overruled. This interview must end, as he has told you, in a compromise. Sign these—resigning all authority over me, and pledging yourself never to be seen in England or in Switzerland again; and we will sign an indemnity against further proceedings.

[OBENREIZER silently takes a pen and signs papers; BINTREY, VENDALE and MARGUERITE do the same—they exchange papers. Smiling bitterly OBENREIZER retains his seat.]

*Bint* What are you waiting for?

*Oben* I have something to say, before I go. [To VOIGT.] Do you remember telling me that you had once an English client named Vendale?

*Voigt* Well, what of that?

*Oben* Maitre Voigt, your clock-lock has betrayed you.

*Voigt* [Alarmed] What do you mean?

*Oben* That I have here, [Showing them] the letters and certificates that were in your client's box—I know their contents.



[VOIGT draws BINTREY aside—they converse for an instant eagerly and rapidly—

*Bint* Well, Mr. Obenreizer, the last move in the game is yours. Play it.

*Oben* These papers [*Holding them up*] establish beyond a doubt the fact that the child taken from the Foundling Hospital by Mrs. Millar, and brought to Switzerland under the name of “Walter Wilding,” was adopted by Mr. and Mrs. Vendale, and that you [*Pointing to VENDALE*] were that child—and that you are a BASTARD! If my niece marries you, she marries a bastard—brought up by public charity! If my niece marries you, she marries an impostor, without name or lineage, disguised in the character of a gentleman of rank and family.

*Bint* Bravo! Admirably put, Mr. Obenreizer! It only wants one word more to complete it. She marries,—thanks entirely to your exertions,—a man who inherits a handsome fortune, and a man whose origin will make him prouder than ever of his peasant wife. George Vendale, as brother executors, let us congratulate each other! Our dear dead friend’s last wish on earth is accomplished. We have found the lost Walter Wilding. As Mr. Obenreizer says—You are the man!

*Oben* Then my curse follow on your marriage! George Vendale you are too strong for me now—but I can live and wait. My curse upon you! [*To MARGUERITE.*]

PICTURE—*To close the Scene.* MARGUERITE starts back alarmed from OBENREIZER, whose attitude is one of intense hate. VENDALE takes a step forward as if to shield her. VOIGT, BINTREY, MADAME DOR and JOEY, R. and L.

SCENE II.—SWISS VILLAGE STREET.—*Front grooves.* Music. Enter BINTREY and JOEY, L. 1 E.

*Bin* Well, Joey, what is your impression of the fortunes of the house of Wilding & Co., as represented by our dear Mr. Vendale? What are your sentiments on that subject, Mr. Ladle?

*Joey* Clear, sir; I’m clearer altogether, sir, for having lived so many weeks on the surface. I never was half so long upon the surface before, and it’s done me a power of good. At Cripple Corner, I was too much below.—Atop of the Alps, I was a deal too high above it.—I’ve found the medium here, sir, and if ever I take it in convivial in all the rest of my days, by the natural channel of my throttle, and not through the pores, I mean to do it now, to the toast of “Bless ’em both.”

*Bint* Ah, Joey, this is a happy day for me. When I recall our poor friend Wilding, I rejoice to think that his one great wish is so well accomplished, and that George Vendale is his heir. His heart prompted him to do a just action and the deserving have been rewarded.

*Joey* Aye, that they have, or I’m no judge of a bottle of twenty-year-old port, or a hogshead of golden sherry of the right brand. Why, bless your heart, when I heard that there young lady, Miss Marguerite, a singing one night, what did I say, what did I say?

*Bint* Well, Joey, what did you say?

*Joey* Why, I up and says to the whole bilin' of them,—and look at me they did too,—why, I up and says “Arter that, ye may all on ye get to bed,” and for the matter of doing anything but muddling the most beautiful 'armony as ever mortals heard, so they might; I'm not so muddled, nor yet so molloncholly as I was, but I sticks to what I said, and to bed they might have gone arter hearing of her.

*Bint* And what did Mrs. Goldstraw say?

*Joey* Well, although she brought a power of trouble into the house, when she came, yet she brought a plenty of good too, for a more united set than the two other cellarmen, the three porters, the two 'prentices—aggrawating young imps they are too—and the odd men, I never saw—

*Bint* That's right, Joey, you've put a livelier face on it at last.

*Joey* Well, sir, I've done my duty, and I could say with the best of them now—“Bless 'em both.” [*A peal of marriage bells heard.*]

*Bint* Hark! they've started for the church. Come, Joey, let us be going.

*Joey* All right, Mr. Bintrey, I'll follow you in the turning of a cork-screw.

[*Exit BINTREY, R. 1 E.*]

*Joey* Well he ain't a bad sort—tho' he be a lawyer—but there's good and bad of all sorts, even lawyers. He's right—I ain't so molloncholly, nor yet so muddled, as I was—

[*Sings—old air.*]

With my jug in one hand and my pipe in my other,

I'll drink to my neighbor and friend,

My cares in a whiff of tobacco I'll smother,

For life I know shortly must end.

While Ceres most kindly refills my brown jug

With good ale I will make myself mellow;

In my old wicker chair I will seat myself snug,

Like a jolly and true-hearted fellow.

I'll ne'er trouble my head with the cares of the nation,

I've enough on my own for to mind;

For the cares of this life are but grief and vexation,

To death we must all be consign'd.

Then we'll laugh, drink, and smoke, and leave nothing to pay,

But drop like a pear that is mellow;

And when cold in my coffin I'll leave them to say,

He's gone, what a jolly good fellow.

[*Exits singing R. 1. E.*]

SCENE III.—*Swiss Village. On L. a church porch. Across the c. of stage, a triumphal arch of foliage is erected, bearing the inscription: “HONOR AND LOVE TO MARGUERITE VENDALE.” Music and bells. An aminated group of peasants discovered at opening of scene; BINTREY and JOEY amongst them. All shout.*

*Bint* Hurrah, good folks, don't shout yourselves hoarse, or you'll have no voices left. Where can Maitre Voigt be? I thought he would have been the first to meet us.

*Joey* [*Looks off R.*] Here comes Mr. Vendale, with she a hanging on his arm—Bless 'em both. Hurrah!

*All* Huzzah! Huzzah!

*Enter* VENDALE and MARGUERITE, attended by two Bridesmaids and MADAME DOR. *They bow their thanks to the peasants, and shake hands with JOEY and BINTREY.*

*Madame Dor.* And now that we are all so—so—happy forgive me, my beautiful, for that I ever was his she-cat.

*Mar.* She-cat, Madame Dor!

*Madame Dor* [*Sobbing.*] Engaged to sit watching my so charming mouse.

*Mar* Why, you are our best friend—George, dearest, tell Madame Dor—was she not our best friend?

*Ven* You were indeed, for one day, whilst you were mending stockings—

*Mar* [*Her hand on his mouth.*] Hush! That would be to betray confidence—

[*She turns and kisses MADAME DOR.*]

*Enter* VOIGT rapidly from back, L., and speaks to BINTREY—they appear excited.

*Voigt* [*Aside to him.*] Hush! a terrible thing has just happened Obenreizer! [*VENDALE leaves MARGUERITE with MADAME DOR and crosses to BINTREY and VOIGT.*]

*Ven* [*In same tone.*] Obenreizer! What of him!

*Voigt* He is dead!

*Bint and Ven* Dead!

*Voigt* Yes. Just outside the village, near the cross-roads, a mass of snow, loosened by the sun, fell upon and crushed him. They are bringing his body this way.

*Bint* Bless me! what fatality!

*Ven* Ah, she must not see it! [*As he crosses to L., to MARGUERITE, the bells begin to peal.*] My marriage bells toll his funeral knell.

*Mar* Why do we wait?

*Ven* Don't go yet, darling?

*Mar* Why?

*Ven* Do not ask me. Will you do me a favor?

*Mar* Gladly. What is it?

*Ven* With my arms encircling you thus, and your head resting on my heart, tell me once more that you love me?

*Mar* I love you!

*As she says this, the bells peal louder. The two Porters, aided by two Guides, are seen to bear from L. at back, across the stage, OBENREIZER'S body, with a cloak thrown over it, on a bier. The peasants uncover.*

PICTURE.

FIRST GUIDE.

SECOND GUIDE.

OBENREIZER'S BODY.

FIRST PORTER.

SECOND PORTER.

PEASANTS.

MADAME DOR, PEASANTS.

PEASANTS.

BRIDESMAIDS, JOEY.

BINTREY.

MARGUERITE.

VOIGT.

VENDALE.

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| 2. " Exterior (a f)        | 11. Street, Foreign (e)                    | 19. Lodging House Room (j) |
| 3. Wood (a j)              | 12. Roadside Inn with river and bridge (k) | 20. Villa (a f)            |
| 4. Prison (c l)            | 13. Foreign Hotel ext. (a f)               | 21. Court of Justice (h)   |
| 5. Field (a k)             | 14. Ship Deck                              | 22. Baronial Hall (h b)    |
| 6. Castle (k)              | 15. Seascape (k)                           | 23. Proscenium, right      |
| 7. Street (p)              | 16. Cave (c l)                             | 23A " left                 |
| 8. Palace (d h)            | 17. Mountain Pass (b k)                    | 24. Curtain                |
| 9. Drawing-room (j)        |  | 25. Drop Scene.            |

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Maria Martin  
Among the Relics  
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An Old Man  
Village Nightingale  
Our Nelly  
Partners for Life  
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Chiselling  
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